

“Jesus urges His followers to love one another.”

**5th Sunday of Easter
May 2, 2010**

The setting of today’s Gospel passage is the last supper. Judas has left to set into motion the arrest of Jesus and His suffering and death. Jesus knows this, and speaks of it to the other disciples as the way in which He is to be glorified.

In the gospels, glory comes through suffering. That is not to say that the gospels glorify suffering as a value in itself. What is valued is faith and fidelity in the face of suffering. Just as He raised up His Son, the Father will raise up anyone who clings to faith in times of testing and duress. All of us will be tried; all of us face daunting challenges. If we hold fast to faith and continue to worship the Lord in difficult times as well as blessed times, then we will share in Christ’s glory.

It is in this setting that Jesus urges His followers to love one another. When we are alone or feel isolated, it is more difficult to remember God’s love and to trust that He is with us even in our suffering. Jesus urges us to be there for one another, encouraging, reminding, helping, and sharing one another’s burdens. He commands us to love one another as He loved us, in unselfish and self-giving service. Such love is the answer to suffering in the world...bearing it together so that it cannot overcome our belief in goodness. We are to be signs to each other of God’s presence to His people, leading them to the point where every tear will be wiped away, As John reminds us in the second reading.

Today some of our young people will receive their First Holy Communion. They will experience just how close the Lord is to us in this joyful celebration. May they experience this closeness in all times, comforting times and challenging times. May a loving community of faith always be there to help them.

God bless our First Communion Class and
All the rest of us!

Fr. Pat