

Homily: 6th Sunday of Easter: Cycle C: 2022: Acts 15: 1-2, 22-29; Ps 67; Rev 21: 10-14, 22-23;
Jn 14: 23-29

“The Holy Spirit leads us into all truth and communion and peace with God”

As we conclude the Easter season over the next two weeks, we are going to hear a lot about the gift of the Holy Spirit: the 3rd person of the Blessed Trinity – the bond of love between the Father and the Son, so strong that He is a separate Divine Person who lives in perfect communion with them. He is invisible like the wind, but we see the effects of His action in the Church and hopefully in our lives, despite collective and individual human weakness and sin.

1. In this time of Easter joy, we are all called to live **the new life of the Spirit** which is revealed in what Jesus says today in the Gospel, *“Whoever loves me will keep my word and My Father will love him. ... Whoever does not love me will not keep my word(s).”* There is inherent tie-in between this statement and what I spoke about last week-end in my homily: that love is primarily shown in the choices we make in our wills - not simply in our feelings and emotions. We can’t honestly say we love the Lord - if we don’t daily strive to be obedient to Him, to keep His 10 Commandments and the Teachings of the Catholic Church which He founded and which is guided and protected in its teachings on faith and morals by the Holy Spirit – the handed down Deposit of Faith for our salvation.
2. If we do love the Lord, by striving to keep His word, then Jesus promises that He and His Father will come to us and make their dwelling in us – in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the gift of **the Indwelling of the Blessed Trinity in our souls**, if we always remain in God’s friendship, in the state of grace. There is no greater gift or sign of God’s true love for us – than that He desires to dwell in our souls by His sanctifying grace. This is why the Church and the Saints warn us in their teaching *to avoid any deliberate mortal sins at all cost, even at the cost of our earthly life - if it came to that.* We are called to always strive with God’s help to live a daily life of charity, prayer, and penance in imitation of Christ and the saints who followed Him with such heroic generosity. Then we will begin to experience more and more **the peace and joy of God** in the depths of our being: *a true sense of His presence, which is a foretaste of the life of Heaven* that awaits His faithful followers, as Jesus promised in the Gospel of John, *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith in God and faith in me. In my Father’s house there are*

many dwelling places; otherwise, how could I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? I am indeed going to prepare a place for you, and then I shall come back to take you with me, that where I am you also may be.” (See: Jn 14: 1-4).

3. Along with the gift of the Divine Indwelling, how else do we begin to sense the peace and joy of God in the depths of our being, the new life won for us by Jesus’s Passion, Death and Resurrection, and, as we celebrate on this Thursday’s Holy Day, Jesus’s Ascension? **By the action of the Holy Spirit in our life.** Remember the Holy Spirit is the one who draws us into deeper communion with the Father and the Son, and He is the one who will lead us into all Truth and remind us of all that Jesus told us. **This occurs both in the Church:** the Holy Spirit is the one who guides the Teaching Authority of the Church – the Magisterium- the Pope and the Bishops in union with him to let the faithful know down through the ages what they need to know and live in order to enter into eternal salvation; and also **in individual souls:** the Holy Spirit helps each of us to put the teaching of Jesus and the Catholic Church in union with Him into practice in our unique circumstances on a daily basis. And the more we grow in God’s love through the Sacraments and the daily embrace of our duties and Cross the more we will experience **the peace and joy of God** in our lives. **This inner peace and joy gives us the real sense that God loves us and He is with us always - despite the many obstacles and challenges of life that sometimes can get us down and tempt us to lose heart.** We also experience the reality that having this gift of God’s life and love in the depths of our being is more important than any earthly delight, and so as a result we freely turn more away from sin and rebellion and move toward God in a life of virtue and holiness. **Then the motivation for living our Faith is no longer “keeping the rules”, so we don’t go to Hell, but instead we follow all the teachings of our Catholic faith to show our love for God in all aspects of life, big and small.** At this Mass and in our daily prayer let us ask the Holy Spirit to daily reveal Himself to each of us in an ever more profound way by His gifts, so that we can truly live the new life Jesus won for us; and that the words Jesus spoke in the Gospel today may come true in our lives: *to the glory of God, for the salvation of our souls, and to help us be ever more effective witnesses of our new life in Christ to the ppl around us in the spirit of peace and joy and gratitude, so they will want to embrace Jesus’s teaching and come to the gift of salvation as well.* God bless you.