

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, May 11th 2013

As we come to the close of the 6th week of Easter, we read of Jesus telling his disciples that he is going to return to the Father. What a time of mixed emotions they must have experienced since Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. When he was led away to his crucifixion and death, the fear must have been overwhelming not just for their dear friend and leader, but for themselves and their families. There also must have been great confusion about how this could have happened to their lord and savior. Then on Easter Sunday the emotions would have swung to great joy as they learned of his resurrection. Their lord was their savior after all. He had overcome death. In today's gospel they start learning that Jesus will leave them again. What faith they must have had to trust in this person who has taken them on a roller coaster ride of emotions. He is going to leave them again, but this time they are more prepared for his departure.

In today's gospel Jesus tells them they do not need him as an intermediary for their prayers. Because of their strengthened faith, they are to pray and take their needs directly to the Father. The kind of faith that the disciples had developed was not one of expectation that God would give them whatever they asked for. Rather, it was a faith that God knew what they needed and would answer their prayers accordingly.

In our society that kind of faith is counter cultural. Our western society, which promotes independence and individual rights so strongly, is not one to leave it up to just anyone to know what is best, not even God. There is an expectation that one should know what is best and that is usually whatever one really wants. It can be difficult in such a society to trust in God's wisdom and love. Yet, what could be better than to know that God loves each of us as individuals, and in his infinite wisdom provides us with what we need?! It can be so reassuring to put our troubles in God's hands knowing he is there to love and support us in our need.

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