

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, May 27th 2014

This week, either on Thursday or Sunday, (depending on the practice within your diocese), we will celebrate the grand opening of the Mystical Body with the ascension of the physical Body of Jesus. As with any grand opening, promises are made in the anticipation of the event. "Come one - come all!" And the celebration will continue with good service and excellent products. These are promises and time will be proving the pudding.

For the past two weeks we have been listening to passages from the Last Discourse of Jesus to his disciples from John's Gospel account. These chapters are somewhat like a long graduation talk delivered by the Teacher Who is also retiring for a while. The Teacher is giving his final comforting, yet challenging instruction. As with most graduation talks, especially the longish ones, there is not really anything new in what he has suggested or indicated to his graduates. Unlike most graduates, these are very attentive and in what we hear today, their listening begins to sadden them. He has frightened them before, but his rendering them sad brings forth the Teacher's most consoling words. They are not being abandoned nor left to their own devices or designs.

A big promise is made to them which is going to call for even more of this faith about which he has spoken often. This Advocate, this Protector-of-the-Truth, this Urger-of-Life, this Hoverer-Overer, will prove to the "world" that the Teacher was from The Truth and that the "world" was wrong for not accepting and believing this Word-Person Who was sent directly to be heard!

The "world" is the outsiders, those who would see and enjoy the death of Jesus as a grand-closing, his death. This death will scatter the graduating class, but the Uniting-Finder will be faithful to these faith-fragile followers. Promises are pronounced and the Grand Opening will take place as advertised and we who now trust in those same promises are those products and services inspired by this same Advocate. The Ascension awaits us and so does our world.

Larry Gillick, S.J.