

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

5th Sunday of Easter | For Sunday, May 10, 2020

A Heart That Need Not Be Troubled

Written by Allison Gingras

Acts 6:1-7

1 Peter 2:4-9

John 14:1-12



Promises have meaning and are typically not taken lightly. There is something about receiving someone's promise that evokes peace in our hearts. While the present moment may be uncertain or trying, knowing there is something good on the horizon gives hope. In John 14, Jesus shares heavenly promises bound to bestow peace and hope.

Jesus comforts us, proclaiming that we should not let our hearts be troubled. He encourages us not only to have faith in God but also to have faith in him, an act of trust you will never find misguided. Faith, as Hebrews 11 tells us, "is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen." Most experiences of faith are something not seen but felt only in our hearts. Perhaps having faith is not always the simplest task, but God never asks the impossible; therefore, we can be assured of the grace necessary to accomplish it.

We can hold tight to other promises shared by Jesus in today's Gospel as well; these are especially comforting in times of uncertainty. Jesus has gone before us and is preparing a place for us — meaning there is room in heaven for everyone. Furthermore, He promises to come back and take us there so that all we need to know of how to get there, is to follow the Way, Jesus himself. For Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life — the model of faith and giver of peace.

Although Jesus has gone before us, he is still, and will always be, right here with us. As worries mount, so too does the tendency to feel God has forgotten us, but the Scriptures ask us to recall the promises of His presence. Hope is restored upon the assurance never to be forsaken nor abandoned (Hebrews 13:5); recalling Jesus remains with us always, until the end of the age, to be exact (Matthew 28:20).

It is precisely those moments when we struggle the most to see God amid our circumstances, that we should rely those promises. With the gift of hindsight, we can look back to the outcomes of other hardships or trials (especially those beyond our control), carefully and prayerfully recognizing all the graces bestowed. Possibly the situation didn't resolve as wished, yet there is a discernable peace associated with that time and some greater good that came from it.

A family once prayed for a cure to their brother's terminal illness. They longed for his healing. As the disease progressed, so did his once dormant faith. Before becoming sick, he was far removed from the Catholic faith. His illness brought forth completely different healing as he decided to embrace a relationship with Christ. The miraculous reception of the sacraments, after too many years to count, and the acceptance of God's will; amazed the family, who likewise found great peace in this otherwise unwanted circumstance. In the end, the eternal promises of Christ resulted in a peace that was truly beyond understanding.

Like St. Thomas, we too can worry we'll not know the path to the place Jesus has prepared for us. The road may seem confusing or beyond our reach. The promises, while trustworthy, may feel as though they are meant for someone else, and not for someone so filled with doubt, sin, or fear. Remember, out of great love for us, while we were still sinners, God sent his only Son to die for our redemption (Romans 5:8).

Jesus is truly the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and we don't have to search far to find he is always with us. He journeys alongside our darkness and our joy. He is the embodiment of the unseen God; if we have seen him, then we have seen the Father.

PRAYER

Jesus, I do not want my heart to be troubled.
I long to live in the peace of knowing
you have prepared a place for me,
and hope to follow you to it one day.
Amen, I do believe in your great works
shared in the Gospels
and long to believe in even greater things.
Guide me to truth along
the way to a life with you, my Lord.
Amen.

We don't need to search far to find signs and wonders of God. We can witness his almighty love in a sunrise, the sweet smile of a child, and the peace which comes in prayer. "Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father," (John 14:11). Amen, this is where hope prevails amid the most challenging and uncertain times.

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