

**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER; Cycle – C; May 25<sup>th</sup> 2025**  
**Acts 15: 22-29; Revelation 21: 10-14, 22-23; John 14: 23-29**

Dear Sisters & Brothers,

Last week we heard Jesus giving his apostles the commandment: *‘love one another as I have loved you.’* In today’s gospel, which is also part of his farewell speech, Jesus makes a stunning revelation that those who love him will experience the presence of both the Heavenly Father and Jesus in them. **He says, “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.”** Perhaps these words gave immediate comfort to the disciples who were sad over the imminent tragic death of Jesus. In John’s gospel Jesus does not do anything of his own; rather he does everything with the command of the Father. Jesus always remains united with the Father. *So whoever loves Jesus, automatically loves the Father too and both of them will dwell with him/her.* The only condition by which one can enjoy the dwelling of God with him/her is **to love Jesus and keep his Word. The Word is nothing but the teachings of Jesus.**

At the Last Supper the disciples were confused and troubled and they lost their peace of mind. So Jesus promises them the perfect peace. He says, **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.”** This promise too was comforting for the disciples. But Jesus has already foreseen the strife, dissensions and disunity awaiting them in the near future. We have already heard in the first reading how the division over observing the Law of Moses grew worse in the newly formed community. The community that was **with one heart and mind** (Acts 4:32), almost lost its peace and unity. Perhaps, the apostles remembered the promise of Jesus for peace.

**When Jesus specifies, “Not as the world gives do I give peace to you?”** What does he mean by that? First of all, let us be clear about the **definition of ‘the world’** according to Jesus. *When speaking about the ‘world’ or ‘worldly,’ Jesus means the secular value system that is focused on short-term physical pleasure, power, prestige, happiness and peace.* The modern world offers thousands of enticements which promise peace and happiness, but they either give short term relief or the offer remains as mere promise. **In the world point of view the absence of conflicts, strife and wars is considered to be peace.** Unfortunately we cannot have a life situation without problems or strife; there aren’t any individuals who don’t have problems. So the world offers *alternative devises* to escape from the troubles and they come very often in the form of alcohol, drugs and material comforts.

Mistakenly people conclude that there are peace and happiness in the bottles displayed in the liquor shops and in thousands of material goods displayed in shopping Malls. Those who fall into the traps of these things feel that they forget all the worries and problems for a while. But the next moment they are surrounded by the same problems. **In the Bible the peace is called 'Shalom' - never means simply the absence of trouble.** *The Hebrew word Shalom is more than just simply peace; it is a complete peace. It is a feeling of contentment, completeness, wholeness, wellbeing and harmony.* Jesus never promised his disciples a problem free life rather cross, persecution and death. Jesus demands from his disciples, **"whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."** But in today's gospel when Jesus promises his disciples, **"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you"** he never asked his disciples try to escape from the conflicts. What Jesus asks his followers is to face these problems and conquer them. **The peace Jesus gives us is the spiritual strength to face all these problems and conquer them and finally come out of them victorious.** That is what the disciples did in the middle of severe persecutions in the first three centuries.

Very often we find two types of people in the world. There are people who get upset and depressed by simple problems in their lives and in the face of problems they are at loss. But there are amazing people, though they are surrounded by problems they remain calm and show courage, hope and trust in the Lord. These are the people who love Jesus and keep his **'Word'** and as a result he and the Father dwell with them. These men and women believe that God will never forget or abandon them. That is why St. Paul, who faced all sorts of dangers in his life, could ask himself, **"What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us."** My dear friends, in all our struggles we can conquer and prevail but only with the help of Jesus who loves us.