

*Readings*

Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

Ps 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20

1 Pt 3:15-18

Jn 14:15-21

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Christ wants to live his life in us. Yes. That is it, quite simply! And in the Gospel today, Jesus elaborates on how this is going to happen in and through his disciples. The Gospel takes us back to Jesus with his disciples after the Last Supper. He is preparing his disciples for a transition that will follow his suffering, death, and resurrection.

We all have experiences of transition in our lives. As an Augustinian, I have experienced many transitions and changes in ministry and residence through 42 years as a priest and 44 years as a solemnly vowed religious. Transitions can evoke various emotions in us. Among these emotions can be joy, wonder, or fear. Transitions may sometimes be welcomed, like graduating from high school or college and moving on to a new phase of life or a new job. On the other hand, when we experience the loss of a loved one or declining health, we find ourselves in another kind of transition. These transitions challenge us to find meaning and hope as we navigate something difficult or unknown.

What was in the hearts and minds of the disciples as they listened to Jesus on the night before his suffering and death? What did they hear as he spoke about his asking the Father to send an Advocate, the Spirit of Truth, to be with them and strengthen them for mission after his resurrection? Certainly, they must have wondered how this would all unfold.

Jesus offered them a promise and hope and offers the same thing to us. The sending of the Spirit would not only strengthen and deepen their faith in Jesus after the resurrection, but it would enable them to be instruments of his healing and loving presence in the world. We see signs of the Holy Spirit at work in the First Reading from the Acts of the Apostles. Philip goes to Samaria proclaiming Christ to the people. When they heard Philip and saw the signs he was doing, “there was great joy in that city.” Joy! This is one of the fruits of the Spirit. It is a sign seen in those seeking to live life in the risen Lord. The refrain of our responsorial psalm today invites us to “Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.” What brings you joy? How does joy manifest itself in your life? To whom are you and I called to bring joy?

Jesus reminds the disciples that another sign of the Holy Spirit is love. Love unites, love heals. Love dwells within us through the gift of the Spirit. Love and joy. Let us pray today for an increase of these gifts in our lives. Let us also give thanks to God on this Mother’s Day for all our mothers, living and deceased, for the love and joy they have given to us.