

6th Sunday of Easter B Homily

“As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love.”

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy might be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you.”

“No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.”

“This I command you: love one another.”

Quid pro quo. This for that. The love that Jesus offers us is the love offered to him by his Father. What is this love from the Father based on? It is based on keeping the Father’s commandments which are the Ten Commandments.

That’s a lot of commandment keeping in order to remain in Jesus’s love. At first it may not seem fair for Jesus to make such a demand. However, Jesus loved his friends so much that he died for them. On second look, keeping the Ten Commandments, when compared to being a martyr for Jesus, seems like a bargain; it doesn’t seem so demanding. If you think being a martyr is glorious and without pain consider the angst endured by the martyrs of our own lifetime.

Jesus wants his joy, the joy he has for keeping God’s commandments, to be our joy too. A cynic may respond by saying: “What? There is joy in keeping the Ten Commandments. Is Jesus out of his mind?” Yes, there is joy in keeping the commandments. Jesus knew that keeping the commandments keeps one’s life in complete solidarity with God’s plan for each person and leads us to eternal joy in heaven. Jesus kept the commandments and invites us to share his eternal joy.

Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another. Many people don’t want someone telling them what to do. Jesus didn’t just tell his disciples “Love one another.” He commanded them to love one another. There is a huge difference in the meaning of the words “tell” and “command”.

For example, if the Archbishop tells me that he wants me to attend a certain event, I'll consider attending. If the Archbishop commands me to attend a certain event, I'll attend. You can bet that the disciples obeyed Jesus's command. Wouldn't you?

Jesus I trust in you.