

VI EASTER – May 29th, 2011

**I WILL ASK THE FATHER, AND HE WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER HELPER – Biblical Commentary by
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Jn 14.15-21

At that time Jesus said to his disciples, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

For the first time in John's Gospel, Jesus asks for love for Himself. But He does only after He had shown the maximum capacity of His love, in doing service for His disciples, after having washed their feet. We are at chapter 14, verse 15 of John's Gospel.

Jesus says: "«If you love me »", therefore for the first time asks for love towards Himself, "«..you will keep my commandments»". There is only one commandment that Jesus mentioned during the supper, that is to love one another as he has loved them, that is as he has served them. Therefore Jesus says: If you love me serve others".

It is not a love that Jesus asks for Himself, but a proof of love towards Jesus is the mutual love that is done in service for others. Well, how is this love answered, Jesus announces that He will pray to the Father, "«..and he will give you another Helper, »": The original Greek word used is 'paraclito', difficult to translate and means " he who comes to rescue, he who helps, who defends", a protector. It is not a the name of the Spirit, but a function. Jesus, as long as he was alive, provided this function of shepherd that protects His own and is ready to give His life. Well. Now that he is no more, there will be his Spirit.

And it will be an advantage. In fact Jesus says, "«...to be with you forever, »". While Jesus cannot always be with His disciples, His Spirit will always be in His community. The fact that it remains for always means that the action of this Spirit will not intervene in moments of danger or situations of emergency,

but will anticipate them. And this gives full security and serenity to the Christian community. Jesus defines this Spirit “*« ..the Spirit of truth»*”- the truth and love that services - “*«whom the world cannot receive.. »*”.

The world is a system of power that is incompatible with love that services. In fact He says “*..because it neither sees him nor knows him.*” In this Gospel those that do not know Jesus, those that do not know the Father, are the religious authority. Who lives in an ambit of power cannot remotely understand what is a love that services. And this is God.

“*«You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you»*”. The evangelist uses the same term for the Spirit that remains on Jesus. “*«..will be in you»*”. As the Spirit remains in Jesus, this Spirit remains in the community of believers. And then Jesus gives assurance – he is announcing His death- “*«I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you»*”. His will not be an absence, but a presence even more intense. “*«Yet a little while and the world will see me no more.. »*”, the world of power will not see Him physically anymore, “*«..but you will see me»*”; what does it mean? The syntony with the life of Jesus makes it present, alive and living inside His community.

“*«Because I live, you also will live. »*” Who in life nourishes others will experience Him, the one who made Himself bread of life to feed His followers. “*«In that day»*”, that is the day of death and of the over pouring of the Spirit, “*«..you will know that I am in my Father, »*” *in the fullness of the divine condition, «..and you in me, and I in you»*”.

It is realized that which the evangelist had always announced: God is love that asks to be welcomed to mix with mankind and to enlarge the capacity of love in a way that the community becomes the only visible sanctuary in which God’s love is radiated. In the community of believers God takes on the human face and mankind takes on a divine face.

And Jesus concludes saying: “*«Whoever has my commandments »*”, underlining that they are His commandments, and not those of Moses. And the only commandment, the one of love that services, is for Jesus important as all the commandments. “*«..and keeps them, he it is who loves me.»*”

Therefore love for Jesus is not towards His person but is aimed towards others in the practice of His commandments, that is in having the same values of Jesus. The more mankind is human, the more they allow the divine to show in themselves. This is the harmony of love of God with mankind, and mankind with God.

And finally the conclusion, “*« And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. »*”. Therefore Jesus confirms that if there is this energy of a received love that transforms itself in communicated love, the community will become the only sanctuary where the love of the Father will show itself. How great will be the answer of mankind practicing love towards others, much greater will be the response of the Father with a new over pouring of Spirit and of a new capacity of love for mankind.