

**THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS – Biblical Commentary by Father . Alberto Maggi OSM**

***John 14,15-16.23-26***

***“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,.....***

***“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you***

The celebration of Pentecost marks the transition from the old covenant. On the actual day that the Jewish community celebrate the gift of the laws to Moses on Mount Sinai, on that day the actions of the Spirit, bursts into the community of believers in Jesus. The start of a new relationship with God.

With Jesus and with the works of this Spirit, the believer is no longer he that obeys a God observing his laws, those given to Moses, but with he that is similar to the Father practicing love similar to his. This is the gift of the Spirit.

The reading for the day of Pentecost presents us with John's gospel, chapter 14, from verse 15 and there are other verses that more or less adjusted to give a single text.

After having made the disciples able to love in the Last Supper through the washing of the feet, Jesus asks for their love. The evangelist writes *“If you love me,... “* it is the first time that Jesus asks for love, but only after he had made his disciples capable of love. *“.....you will keep my commandments.”* At the Last Supper Jesus had left only one commandment. He said: *“A new commandment I give to you,.. “(John13,34)* New meaning not one to add to the others, but one of a better quality that substitutes all the others. And what is the commandment? *“...that you love one another, just as I have loved you...”* So there is a single commandment. Why then does Jesus now say: *“..you will keep my commandments.”?* They are his commandments, not those of Moses. There is a single commandment, that is that of love,

his external manifestation on all occasions in which it is expressed, these are the commandments. Therefore, no external precepts to man, but external manifestations of a profound internal reality.

*“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper,..”* A person that comes to help, to aid. In court it would be a defence attorney, the intercessor. But with a difference. This helper is he who is called in to help, this action of the helper, of the Spirit in the Christian community comes *“.. to be with you forever,.....”*

That is, the presence of the Spirit is not due to dangerous conditions, but it is constant. This is the guarantee for the community from Jesus, that God does not come in the moments of need or necessity, in the moments of suffering of the community, but he is always present and anticipates his actions.

So the actions of the helper do not only come when called, but it is constant and presence in the community.

And Jesus continues: *“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”* The evangelist in the Prologue had written that the verb had placed his tent in the midst of us. Now Jesus realises this. When there is a community of love, when this love received from God communicates love to brothers, Jesus says *“.. we will come to him and make our home with him.”*

Man becomes the only true sanctuary from which radiates and manifests love, compassion and the Father’s mercy. Jesus’ God is not a God that asks for offerings, but it is he who offers himself to mankind, he asks to be welcomed into his life, to expand his capacity of love, and make it the only true sanctuary. This declaration of Jesus is important. God is not found in the temple anymore, the temple where people must go to undergo certain purification rites, a temple where certain people could not enter because they felt excluded, well this function of the new temple that is the person, the community of believers in Jesus, will have its real orientation to go to the excluded, to the outcasts and to the rejected.

Those that did not have access to the temple now are the temple of God, a God who will go to them. And Jesus continues; *“Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.”*

The Fathers’ word is a word that has an energy and a creative power. Therefore it is the acceptance of this word that fills life in the community. Jesus concludes: *“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.”* We are near the end, in a while Jesus will be arrested, but here again comes the Helper *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit,..”*

For the first time Jesus calls it “Holy”, that does not indicate the exceptional quality of this Spirit, but the activity, that of sanctification, to separate he who welcomes it from the sphere of evil to draw and lead him to the sphere of good.

*“.. whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”* It is not a new message, but a broader understanding of Jesus’ message. The

action and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the community gives it the capacity to always offer a new answer to the new needs of the people.