

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

John 14,15-16.23-26

« Truly, truly, I say to you,.....

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. ».

Pentecost was one of the three agricultural festivals that the people of Israel celebrated. It was the festival of the unleavened bread, Easter, the harvest festival or the festival of the week, at the end of the wheat harvest, and it is called Pentecost, which in Greek means fiftieth or fifty days after Easter, and the end of the harvest or the tent festival.

Then this agricultural festival then took on a very important religious significance. It was the festival in which one commemorated and thanked the Lord for the gift of the laws on mount Sinai through Moses. Then, right on the day in which the Jewish community celebrated the gift of the laws, here the irruption of the Spirit into the small community of the believers in Jesus.

Luke, the evangelist, wants to show, in this way, the radical change inside this community. It had gone from Moses' alliance to the new alliance proposed by Jesus. While Moses, the Lord's servant, had proposed an alliance between the servants and their Lord, based on obeying his laws. Jesus, who is not the Lord's servant, but his son, offers and proposes an alliance between the sons and their Father, no more based on the obedience of the laws, but on the welcoming and practicing of his love.

This is the new alliance and it is the meaning of Pentecost. The reading that the liturgy presents us with for this day is that of John, chapter 14. There are some verses and we see that they relate to the most direct intervention of the Spirit.

Jesus says: *"If you love me,"* For the first time Jesus asks to be loved, but He does it only after having made the disciples able to love. Only after does He ask for their love. "... *you will keep my commandments*" it seems strange that Jesus speaks of commandments, in the plural, when at while before He had said to the disciples: "I leave you one commandment," only one.

What does this mean? There is only one commandment, that is to accept Jesus' love and His communication through service, the faithful love for others, but then in the external manifestation of this one commandment they had all the values of the commandments.

So they are not rules external to mankind that the believers must obey, but they are the external manifestation of a inner reality of love. Well then, Jesus says and ensures: *"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper.."* The word used originally is the Greek word 'Paracrito', difficult to translate, but has the meaning of a protector, it is not a name, but the function of the Spirit.

".. to be with you forever,.." this emphasis of Jesus' is important. The 'paracrito', helper or protector is he that comes to help, but this help – Jesus make us understand – is not born in the difficulty of the believers, of the community, but what precedes them. The presence of the Spirit is not the result of danger, but this presence is constant.

".. to be with you forever,..", this gives a lot of serenity to the believer and to the community who do not have to worry about anything because they have the Lord's Spirit with them to anticipate their needs. And this allows them to occupy themselves with the needs of others. So the help of the Spirit is not born in difficulty, but anticipates them.

Jesus says that the intervention of this Spirit, *"...the helper, the Holy Spirit"....* does not mean so much the excellent quality of this Spirit, but its capacity to sanctify, that is to free from the sphere of evil, darkness and lies those who accept it. *"..whom the Father will send in my name"*, Jesus' name means "the Lord saves", therefore it is for salvation and the fullness of mankind, *"..he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."*

Jesus is not speaking of a new message, but a greater understanding of ourselves. The more the believer (and the community) accept this Spirit, the more this Spirit leads one to orientate one's own life to the service of others to communicate life to others, so Jesus' message becomes more significant and understandable.

The word of Jesus is understood when it is lived. The greater the response of love to others, the greater will be the understanding of the message of Jesus.