

VI SUNDAY OF EASTER – May 5<sup>th</sup> , 2013

**THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL BRING TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE ALL THAT I HAVE SAID TO YOU – Biblical Commentary by F. Alberto Maggi OSM**

***Jn 14,23-29***

***At that time, Jesus said to his disciples, "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. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.***

***You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.***

This Sunday's reading, in John's Gospel chapter 14, contains a verse, - 23 – that by itself, if understood, radically changes the relationship with God, the idea of God and the consequences of the relationship towards others.

Which is this verse? Jesus says "*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.*" What is Jesus saying? This is not a promise for the afterlife, but the Father's answer to the behavior during this life. Jesus in fact says. " if...he keeps my word."

The acceptance of Jesus is inseparable from His message of love to all mankind, that Jesus had manifested in the only commandment that He left for His community: God's word is not seen in writing, but in life, not in laws, but in love.

In the Exodus God had placed his dwelling in a tent in the middle of the people, and guided them towards freedom. Then God became seized by the priestly caste and placed in a temple

where not everyone had access to him, some were excluded and above all through payment of taxes and offerings.

With Jesus, God has abandoned the temple and, as written by John in the beginning of his Gospel, “has placed his tent in our midst”. It is the beginning of a new Exodus, a new way of liberation where each disciple of Christ becomes his divine dwelling.

Mankind had sacralized God, through the communication of his Spirit God now sacralizes mankind. Sacred places do not exist outside of mankind, the sacralization of mankind offered by Jesus therefore de-sacralizes all that had been conceived and passed off as sacred.

God is not an external reality of mankind or is far from him, but is internal and now has a name : Father. While the relationship with God had need of meditation, the intimacy of the believer with his father with the Father, becomes superfluous.

God is neither external to mankind nor far from him, but is internal and now has a name : Father. While the God asks for dotting priests, the Father of Jesus asks only to be sons like him, not subjects, but collaborators, not psalm-singing devotees, but courageous men. When mankind understands this change in the relationship with God; understands that God does not absorb the energy of mankind, but communicates his energy, a God that does not weaken mankind but strengthens him, and above all does not ask mankind to live for him – this is typical of religion – but live off him, and to know that with him and like him, the bearer of this growing wave of life and love for all humanity.

This is the commandment given by Jesus and it is this the teaching that John the evangelist passes on to us. Understanding this mankind experiences that joining with God does not weaken him, but strengthens him and he becomes part of the creative project, of communicating life to everyone.

And how is this done? Making every man a visible sanctuary where he can manifested his love and his mercy. A God that does not ask offerings of mankind, but offers himself and asks to be welcomed, to join with him, and become the one and only true sanctuary from which radiates his love, his mercy and his compassion.

While in the old sanctuary the people had to go on certain conditions, now it is the believer, the community, the new sanctuary, going towards others, and above all towards those lost, the excluded and the rejected.

This is the good news brought by Jesus this Sunday.