



FIFTH SUNDAY OF *Easter*

MAY 10, 2020

Jesus said,
“I am the way and the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14:6

A SPIRITUAL LIFE IN A CONCRETE WORLD

Today’s readings describe the complexities of trying to live a spiritual life while still living in a world that demands concrete action. Acts tell us about disagreements beginning to emerge in the early Christian communities over divisions of labor. Some people are praying and preaching while others are feeding the hungry. In First Peter we are reminded that Jesus is the cornerstone. Jesus was rejected yet is the very foundation for building the community, and yet he is also a stumbling block for those who do not follow the path laid out by his life and works. In John we hear again the contrast of the spiritual and the concrete, of houses with many rooms, of truth and life. Is it surprising that the apostles and we are sometimes confused about how to live the life Jesus intended for us?

FINDING REALITY IN FAITH

The readings today describe a faith community struggling with the realities of preaching, teaching, praying, and spreading the word of God while others are concerned about putting food on the table and a roof over their heads. In Acts decisions are made about a division of labor. Some will preach and others will ensure that the community is fed. In First Peter there is talk of spiritual houses, builders, and cornerstones, of faith and stumbling blocks. In John, Jesus begins to prepare the apostles for his departure. Jesus talks about his Father’s house but the apostles want concrete answers to their questions. They want to see the Father. They don’t know the way. Jesus’ response is both spiritual and concrete. His answer is both faith and works.

FINDING FAITH IN THE REAL WORLD

The tensions within the readings are tensions we feel every day between our faith and the world in which we live. We stumble over stones that litter the way, over lies that hide the truth, even over the reality of death. We want our faith to be solid, so we can test its permanence and reality. But faith is not concrete. Faith is a living thing, a leap into the unknown. Works are concrete. The works of the apostles are what sustained them even as they struggled with their own faith. We must feed the hungry and shelter the homeless even as we speak to ourselves and others of faith beyond brick and mortar. While we live in a world of harsh realities, we must remember there are realities beyond those we see but not beyond our belief. We know that the faith born of love for others and lived out in caring for the sick and sorrowful, the hungry and homeless, the poor and imprisoned is real.

TODAY’S READINGS

Acts 6:1–7

Psalms 33:1–2, 4–5, 18–19

1 Peter 2:4–9

John 14:1–12

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