

HOMILY 6TH SUN EASTER May 17, 2020

Because He lives
I can face tomorrow
Because He lives
Every fear is gone
I know He holds my life, my future in His hands...
Amen, Amen
I'm alive, I'm alive
Because He lives
Amen, Amen
Let my song join the one that never ends
Because He lives

I think the Gospel reading today must have been the inspiration for this song. Jesus tells us “because I live, you will live.” Jesus’ Holy Spirit gives us life and lives in us. We mark Pentecost at the day the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples. We think of receiving the Holy Spirit on the day of our baptism and being strengthened by the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation, and this is very true. However Jesus’ Holy Spirit is within us always. Do you believe in Jesus’ Holy Spirit out there somewhere, or do you believe in Jesus’ Holy Spirit within you? These are two very different perspectives. When I celebrate Mass with children, I like to ask questions and sometimes I am surprised by the answers. One time I asked kids if they know that Jesus lives in them. One little girl said: “Yes! I know Jesus lives in me because when I put my hand on my heart I can feel him walking around in there.” Isn’t that great? She gets it!

That is how close of a relationship that Jesus’ Holy Spirit has with us. And we hear in the Gospel reading that he is our advocate. He is working for us. He is leading us to health and wholeness. We need to follow him. We need to remember that we are never alone. I want to repeat that, especially for those of us who are sheltering alone. We are never alone. He sustains our life every day. We could not live without him. He will always sustain us because we are

going to live forever. That is his promise. One day our bodies are going to stop working. Our bodies are going to die but we will live forever.

Jesus told us that if we love Him, we will keep his commandments, and the biggest commandment is the commandment of love. Love and serve the Lord by loving and serving one another. Love your neighbor as yourself. How can you better love the people you are sheltering with? You may have had a little too much togetherness and you may not have that warm fuzzy feeling for everyone you live with, but you have to remember love is not a feeling, love is a verb. Without that warm fuzzy feeling you can still love, empathize, serve, sacrifice, listen, appreciate, and affirm. That is what it is about. And when we leave home, wearing a mask and physical distancing is the way we can love and respect the people we come in contact with. And we need to be very purposeful about it because we are not used to doing it. And we have to lovingly remind people to keep their distance. We need to lovingly remind people not to pull their mask down when they talk to us. It is not what we are used to but it is the loving thing to do. We need to respect the dignity of all human life and that is how we do it. That is what we need to do during this pandemic. What each of us does affects the people around us for good or for bad.

Because Jesus lives, we will live. He lives in us and will never leave us. We need to be aware of his presence and follow where he leads. He is going to lead us to love the people we come in contact with. He sustains our lives every moment of every day. One day our body will stop working, but we are going to live forever. That should fill us with hope, even in this time of pandemic.