

Fifth Sunday of Easter 2019

My beloved brothers and sisters, every human being in this world is constantly seeking to fill up the void in their hearts and lives. The problem is, that since the fall of man in Adam and Eve, we've been seeking to do so in an impossible way. We try to fill up the God-sized hole in our hearts with wealth, things, sex, booze, drugs, and on and on; but, our human experience tells us that none of these things has ever been able to satisfy us!

If God came to us and told us: "Listen! I'm going to tell you exactly what you need to do to fulfill your life and truly satisfy your life!" Wouldn't you do that? My beloved brothers and sisters, He has come to us, in the flesh, and told us. He knows, because He created the God-shaped hole in our hearts that can only be filled with Himself. St. Augustine, in His Confessions testifies: "Our hearts are restless O Lord, until they rest in thee; for you Have made us for yourself!" In the Gospel for today, Jesus tells us how we come to ultimate fulfillment:

First, in this Gospel, He tells us that His suffering, death and resurrection will be His glory. How can that be? Suffering does not at all seem glorious? It is because through the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, we have been reconciled with God. Jesus has made it possible for us to receive God's love and to love Him through the infinite act of Jesus' love for us on the Cross. That is the Glory of God made visible to us! As we conform ourselves to this love, we begin to fill up in us, what was so damaged by sin. St. Therese Lisieux tells us that God thirsts for our love, and the greatest consolation we can offer to Jesus is to quench His thirst for our love. But, even this has been empowered by God, so great is His thirst for our love.

He tells His disciples and us, that when we have received the power of the Holy Spirit which is unleashed by His perfect love in His suffering, death and resurrection, the Holy Spirit will enable us to go out into the world and to love Like God loves us! Jesus asks us to love one another as He has loved us. God can command us to love like He loves us, because love has first been given by Him to us. The more and more I give myself to this Infinite Power of Divine Love, the

more I am empowered to love like God. This is the power we see at work in the lives of the Saints!

Jesus then says to us: “As I have loved you, so you should also love one another”. How has Jesus loved us? To the very end of laying down His life for us; and because of His Divine Empowerment, we can love others in the same way. But Jesus also tells us how we can heal the Church and heal our society: He says: “This is how all will know that you are my disciples: if you have love for one another!” In all of this, the word for love that Jesus uses is not the Hollywood, syrupy love we see in the movies or hear in popular music; rather, it is the love that He shows us in His self-sacrificing love.

This love, is the tunic of the Christian. It was symbolized by the white garment that the child or adult put on after their Baptism. In fact we say it: “Put on Christ!” This is not the love of good feelings. It is a love that call us to lay down our lives for others, just as Jesus laid down his life for us. I cannot do this of myself, but the good news is this: by the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ can and will do this in me, if I give myself over to His Divine love!