

6th Sunday of Easter
May 26, 2019
“Faithful to the Original Words”

Acts 15:1...29

Rev 21:10...23

Jn 14:23-29

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

There is more than one reason why our nation and politics are in such disarray today. One, is the fact that people in leadership do not wish to subscribe to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They would like to believe that the Constitution can be changed – that it can be modified – or done away with altogether.

Because of seemingly new and modern challenges, they try to interpret the Constitution to mean something that our Founding Fathers never intended. Thus, the freedom of speech is perverted to being able to say anything – even if it is untrue. The Constitution is likewise distorted to justify the stifling of another’s right to say things that they have a legitimate right to say at a conference or at an assembly.

These scenarios are compounded by another serious aberration. The right to privacy has now been grotesquely distorted into the right for a woman to abort the child in her womb! In addition to these few, of many examples, is another failure in modern America. This is the loss of belief in God and adherence to the 10 Commandments.

I have mentioned before that Thomas Jefferson once said that without belief in a Supreme Being and in a basic Christian morality, no republic can long survive. Indeed, America seems to be going the way of all the great nations of history. Their destruction or dissolution always came from internal moral disintegration!

Today, in the Gospel, Jesus tells us that those who love him will keep his word. The word of Jesus is all that he said and did. It includes the Gospel imperatives that can guide everyone’s life. His word reveals the love that the Father has for us and for the world He created. His word teaches of the love and care we should have for others and for our entire world.

The Church has outlasted many empires and nations. The Church is the extension of Jesus into the 21st century. The Pope and the bishops are the successors to Peter and the other 11 apostles. They have remained faithful to Jesus and to his word while great nations and empires have come and gone. Our Church has endured because the leaders and the Christian community have remained faithful to the word of Jesus and never deviated from the truths he taught. When faced with a new challenge, they reflect upon the past. They consult with other faithful believers, and they pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction!

This is what Peter, James, John, and the other disciples did when presented with a new challenge by Paul and Barnabas in the passage from the Acts of the Apostles. They found a way to compromise. They held together the differing groups of gentile converts and the converted Jewish traditionalists. They compromised non-essential Old Testament religious practice without compromising the Gospel, the 10 Commandments, and the way of Jesus. Circumcision was superseded by Baptism and the Eucharist. But pagan religious eating practices and sex outside of a true marriage was forbidden.

The Church has, likewise, survived because Jesus promised the Holy Spirit who continues to be with us. This Spirit of God continues to work in our hearts and in the whole community. This Spirit enables us to face new challenges – and new moral dilemmas with truly godly insight and inspiration. This is how the Church can be so uncompromising on some issues. Yet, at the same time, it can be forgiving and merciful to those who continue to struggle with the personal challenges that they face!

Brothers and Sisters, we live in a chaotic world, a divided nation, and, today, even in a wounded Church. All of the current problems everywhere could be eliminated:

- if people truly learned to love –
- if they believed in the one true God and the Gospel His Son came to teach us –
- if they truly prayed and opened themselves, unselfishly, to what the Spirit reveals in their hearts!

So, let us pray, that we can truly become the new, godly people that Jesus came to establish. And may his peace and not the pseudo peace of the world be forever established within us!

Amen.

May 26, 2019

Msgr. Russell G. Terra