

## Homily St Pius St Anthony 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday Easter Year A John 14:15-21

Jesus' words here bother His disciples ("Did Jesus say 'another advocate' – we want Him" v.16, & "Did He say 'leave'-why go?" v.18) Jesus must have seen it on their faces – of course-He knows their hearts), as He has talked about 'going to the Father' (John 13:33, 36; 14:2, 5 - this is His Last Supper--last talk--things are about to change for everyone)

In seven verses, though, Jesus assures them five times – you won't be alone

1-The Spirit, I ask for you and the father gives, will be in you (Jn 14:16-17)

2-You won't be orphans - I will come to you (Jn 14:18)

3-You will see me (even if world doesn't) (14:19) "you will live"

4-You are in me and I in you (14:20)

5-I will reveal myself to you, as you observe my commands (14:21)

I'd say there's a lot of maternal comfort and considerate wisdom in today's gospel. Yes, this is the sixth Sunday of Easter, yet doubly blessing us, we also honor our moms today, this being Mother's Day.

Jesus is telling his disciples, what moms always tell children – I will be with you, even if you don't see me – like physically sitting beside you - I am behind you – but observe what I tell you – do what I've taught you. And I am always with you

So, to all moms today, we are so grateful for you, & thank God for you, that with our Fathers you gave us life, nurtured raising us & built up faith within us by your loving sacrifice of years of large & little acts of care & comfort. We honor you today & ask Him to bless you as we your blessings visit you today! I have to say that I hear an echo of my mom, and I bet others do too, in Jesus' words today. More than once she said "Even if you don't see me, I'm here"-- that was when she seemed to have eyes everywhere, like when neighbor informants let her know we kids were throwing rocks at the passing train! And more than once after removing a giant splinter from our fingers, she'd say "You will live"! (our neighborhood repeated the urban legend that if you got a telephone pole splinter--coated with that tar creosote--you'd die in 24 hours) AND too many times to count, she said. "Observe my commands and I am with you", when she would repeatedly tell us, "If you love me, then love-get along-with your brother!" So certainly, Jesus' gospel words today sound a lot like a loving mother.

Jesus' teaching today highlights His own role as Advocate for us, even as He ensures a future Advocate, for us (It may be the Spirit, yet Jesus set it up--asked such a gift from the Father for us!) How maternal a concern to make

such future arrangements! In our own experience, is there any stronger advocate than our moms? The bible word 'Paraclete', the title word for Spirit is 'Advocate' or helper-comforter. Literally, someone 'by one's side' (A combination of Gk para 'alongside' and Gk kalein 'to call') -that's someone to sit with you-represent you- get or have your back! Think of the role of an ombudsman in medical care, a tutor in the educational system or an attorney defender in the legal system (aka counselor). That's the Advocate Spirit, Jesus is talking about. Yet, how many moms perform all those duties all the time! Our greatest advocate growing up was our mom. She is always your #1 cheerleader! Everything is going to be okay, we'd say, if Mom is in your corner!

We all saw an example of this recently, or it seemed like just yesterday. I know going back, I am skipping a sports season bringing up football example, (recall that for us UK fans--March was a bad dream) but earlier back in January, when IU, Indiana University, won the college NCAA football championship, well, their star quarterback, credited with thanks first thing after victory His MOM! He had done the same calling on her/thanking her back in Dec, when he was named 2025 Heisman trophy winner. Fernando Mendoza, said, "**Mom, this is your trophy as much as it is mine**----(& this is the part I'm after) **You've always been my biggest fan-You're my light, you're my why, you're my biggest supporter.**" His mother suffers from Multiple Sclerosis, and is often wheelchair bound – but she is always there at games and rooting for her son.

That's a kid's superpower--his/her mother's belief in them. Mom behind them, giving that inner confidence and resilience that potentially overcomes everything. Moms always make things right – even if they don't, its still okay in the end, if mom is just there!

So today's gospel has Jesus give His disciples a pep talk, just like a mom would to her children, Jesus is letting His disciples know that they are never alone – He is with us..... He gives us himself - His spirit and His words Jesus calls His spirit, Truth, and He adds that the world might not accept it - because it doesn't know/see it.....(Jn 14:17) But "You do" He tells us 'we know' His spirit-His word-His truth and we are to keep them close -aka keep His commands-doing things as He did, saying the words He said (Jn14:17)

Jesus goes on to prophesy, in 14:19 he says, "In a little while the world will no longer see me, **but you will see me**" and then on in Jn 14:21, He adds that He will 'reveal myself' to whoever observes/does my commands. We will see Jesus, if we hold to what He gave us – His word and spirit.

Maybe like a mother, who sees more in us than we see in ourselves, (or the world sees in us) Doesn't a mom always see more, all of our potential - like a good teacher, like a good coach, like a defender who focuses on our hidden good and drawing it out from us by their care, cultivating within us that latent good that needs birthing from us. That is Jesus' shepherding of us, beyond his death and resurrection as His spirit continues to bring us to life So may we help others too, as an advocate for their good to shine, by our service of them in Jesus' Name – loving them as Jesus loves us. His Word!