

May 22, 2025

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

YOU WILL REMAIN IN MY LOVE

By David C. Robinson, SJ

Excerpts from Today's First Reading & Gospel

Peter got up and said to the Apostles and presbyters, "My brothers, you are well aware that from early days God made his choice among you that through my mouth Gentiles would hear the word of the Gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness by granting them the Holy Spirit just as he did us. He made no distinction between us and them, for by faith he purified their hearts."

ACTS 15:7-9

Jesus said to his disciples: "As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love."

JOHN 15:9-10

Reflection

As Paul and Barnabas journey through the emerging Christian communities in what is now central and southern Turkey, they find a disconcerting mix of Jews and Gentiles, some of whom embrace them with full enthusiasm. Others want to kill them on the spot! As the Gospel mission attempts to embrace the traditions of the diaspora Jews and the various Greek communities, heated debates rage over the way Jews can adopt faith in Jesus, and what dictates of the Law they must adhere to. The Gentiles often resist what seems to them to be religious coercion—they do not readily desire to be subsumed to an alien tradition.

To the great benefit of these complex groups, the voice of Peter enters as a breath of spiritual reason in the midst of mistrust. Peter stands as a true Jewish believer among the devoted. When he receives a vision urging him to move beyond the rigid dietary laws that ground his choice of foods, he firmly resists, never having violated a single rule. In a trance he hears God's voice, admonishing him, "Do not call impure anything that God has made clean" (Acts 10: 15). Thus begins the expansion of his religious horizon, allowing him finally to embrace the truth that the faithful find their salvation through fidelity to the path of Jesus rather than dedication to the ancient Covenant.

In John's gospel, we are exhorted in grace to surrender our lives and our spiritual heart into the love of Jesus. He regularly urges his companions to recognize the utter centrality of love—the soul of his messianic ministry and communion of disciples. This is not sentiment or social attraction; it is an absolute spirit of union that undergirds all of life, religious community, and intimacy with God. When he speaks of his 'great commandment,' Jesus is not creating a formula for behavior or social identity. He is establishing the very core of life and being as it is birthed into us throughout time: **"As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love."** May we all be absorbed into this miracle of all that we are and aspire to be!



Ignatius in Rapture
Photo by David C. Robinson, SJ

For Pondering

- How would you share your sense of God's love in your life with those closest to you?
 - What aspects of your life, faith, and religious community help you to nurture this love in your sense of yourself and God?
 - How do you recognize this authentic love in others who share life with you? How do you receive it and return it?
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