

May 6, 2024

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

I WILL SEND YOU THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

By Fr. David C. Robinson, SJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

Jesus said to his disciples: "When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me. And you also testify, because you have been with me from the beginning. I have told you this so that you may not fall away."

JOHN 15:26-27

Reflection

The fifteenth chapter of John's gospel celebrates the abiding unity between the Father, Jesus, and the faithful people of God. He begins with the metaphor of the vine and the branches, extolling the depth of life and spirit that exists between the Father of all and the many who bear fruit by virtue of that connection. As the gospel explains:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. I am the vine;

you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.” (Jn. 15: 1, 5, 8)

As John does some 56 times in his gospel, he heralds the role of the various forms of love in the relationships of people with one another and with God. Jesus always embraces the Great Commandment of the Torah as he teaches his followers to live their covenant with God. All three synoptic gospels quote the Commandment directly, and John integrates it into the identity of his growing communities of disciples:

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.” (Jn. 15: 9-12)

As the communities mature in this mandate of love, they grow in their ability to discern God's way with them through the influence of the Advocate, the Spirit of truth that nurtures wisdom in their lives with God and neighbor. The ultimate fruit of love is wisdom, and the guiding principle of all wisdom is love. The Advocate is the Spirit's guidance for all humanity as we, like the first believers, navigate the delicate path between divine vision and personal circumstance. As branches on the vine of life, we are solidly rooted in the saving presence of the One who is both our source and our fruitfulness. However, we are also the harvest of the Spirit's love, as we learn to journey with freedom in service to others. The Advocate is the heart of the wisdom that builds community and church, and helps us to follow Jesus on our path of life.



The Empty Cross
Photo by Fr. David C. Robinson, SJ

For Pondering

- How do you experience the reality of love in your faith community?
- How would you explain the unique qualities of God's love to someone who has yet to discover it?
- How might church communities nurture a more personal sensitivity to

God's love in their lives?

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