

## **Introductions to the readings for Sunday, May 21, 2017**

After we celebrate the joy of the resurrection at Easter, we might be inclined to fall back into our everyday routines.

We might be inclined to put away thoughts of what it means to take part in a living and growing faith sustained by the presence of the risen Christ at its core.

This morning as we celebrate the sixth Sunday in the celebration of Jesus' resurrection, we find ourselves re-visiting the story of Jesus' last night with his beloved followers.

Gathered together in the Upper Room for their last meal before his arrest, trial, and death on the cross, though Jesus' followers know not what lies ahead, Jesus does. In this way, he tries to prepare them for the challenges of what is to come.

His message to them is this: No matter how challenging their circumstances might seem; no matter how isolated, persecuted, or alone they might feel, he promises them they will not be alone. He promises that he will ask God to send them the Spirit of Truth, advocate, friend, companion, guide for the journey. He reminds them also that they are to love one another always.

Imagine what sense of comfort and support these words might have offered those first followers, the Johannine community, trying to hold things together some 80-90 years after the fact.

How might Jesus' promise to his disciples also sustain you in your experiences of isolation, persecution, or abandonment, especially as it relates to Jesus' commandment to remember to love one another always?

Reading from the gospel according to the author of John, Chapter 14, verses 15-21, found at page 877 in your pew bible.

**“The Advocate, the Spirit, will be with you.”**

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.

In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live.

On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

The Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God, amen.**