



John 14:23-29

23 Jesus said to his disciples:

'If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him. 24 Those who do not love me do not keep my words. And my word is not my own: it is the word of the one who sent me. 25 I have said these things to you while still with you; 26 but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you.

27 Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. 28 You heard me say: I am going away, and shall return. If you loved me you would have been glad to know that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29 I have told you this now before it happens, so that when it does happen you may believe.'

Other readings: Acts 15:1-2,22-29 Psalm 66 (67) Apocalypse 21:10-14,22-23

As in last week's gospel, we read this Sunday from the words of Jesus at the Last Supper in the Gospel of John, the so-called 'farewell discourse'. The theme of 'love' emerges again, not the love of one disciple for another, but the disciple's love for Jesus. Love for Jesus brings down the love of the Father. This love is shown by 'keeping the word' of Jesus, and keeping the word of Jesus is keeping the word of the Father who sent him. Jesus draws us into intimacy with the Father. What was stated in the very first chapter of the gospel is explained, that the only-begotten Son has made the unseen God known (1:18).

Fidelity to the word of Christ is not easy. Aware that the disciples will need assistance to recall and practise his word, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit 'will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said'. To live as Christians requires this remembering of all that Jesus said and did, but also openness to the new insights provided by the Spirit, who is constantly active in the Church. The Spirit is given the name 'Advocate', in Greek *parakletos*, which means one who is 'called alongside', one who is called to assist. John alone uses this term for the action of the Spirit.

The final verses speak of 'peace', the peace that the world cannot give. The departure of Jesus to the Father 'who is greater than I' should not undermine the peace of the disciples, for they already know the Father's closeness through Jesus.

What does it mean to keep the word of Christ?

How do we know the closeness of the Father?

We pray for those who preach Christ's word.

We pray that we may be receptive to the work of the Spirit, called to assist us by Jesus.