

# Father John's Gospel Reflection



## Gospel

**GOSPEL – SUNDAY, 21 MAY, 2017**  
- SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (John 14:15-21)

***I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate.***

Jesus said to his disciples:

'If you love me you will keep my commandments.  
I shall ask the Father,  
and he will give you another Advocate  
to be with you forever,  
that Spirit of truth  
whom the world can never receive  
since it neither sees nor knows him;  
but you know him,  
because he is with you, he is in you.  
I will not leave you orphans;  
I will come back to you.  
In a short time the world will no longer see me;  
but you will see me,  
because I live and you will live.  
On that day  
you will understand that I am in my Father  
and you in me and I in you.  
Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps  
them  
will be one who loves me;  
and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father,  
and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

## Reflection

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As John 21:25 suggests, the author of this Gospel was very selective in recording the words and deeds of Jesus - stories chosen to indicate that Jesus is the Messiah. Here we have the personal instruction of Jesus to his disciples as he ate a meal with them. These sayings of Jesus do not appear in any of the synoptic gospels.

Here the disciples are apprehensive, anxious and grieving about the thought of their being separated from Jesus- this is sometimes called his "farewell discourse." This literary genre is common in the scriptures, cf. the great farewell discourse of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy, and Paul in Acts 20:17-38.

It is a recurring theme in Johannine writings, that of Jesus' love for his friends, this is to be returned by the disciples' love for Jesus, and that is to be manifested in obedience to his commands, which are to include all of the teachings of Jesus, and not simple ethical precepts. Now while these commands of Jesus and his teaching are manifold, they are carried out ultimately in the context of a single command - that is to love others unconditionally as our brothers and sisters! Then says Jesus, I will make a request to the Father.

In typical fashion for John, Jesus expresses his subordination to the Father, in this case by asking the Father for the gift of the Paraclete. As Jesus himself had been a paraclete for his disciples, this new paraclete will be like Jesus, who in his earthly ministry engaged in all the acts of helping people, ministering to, and healing them.

Knowing that the paraclete will be with them forever, this would have brought great comfort to these anxious men, and would have guaranteed their permanent relationship with Jesus.

*Fr John Boyd-Boland ofm*

1. All of the ethical teachings of Jesus can be summed up by the single command, "love one another, as I have loved you."
2. With Jesus, we are to acknowledge that God is our caring, loving and sustaining Creator.
3. The Paraclete is a gift to us – let us take time to hear the voice of the Paraclete in our lives, who comforts and challenges us.

## Take home Message