

Showing, Not Proving Love

Intro. To quote Peter at the Transfiguration on the mountain, “*Lord, it is good to be here.*” I have missed you.

We have heard the phrase, “If you love me, you will do this for me.” If said with humor, “If you love me you will bring me a bowl of ice cream,” it could be funny. But in other situations, it can be more of a demand to *prove* one’s love by some grudging action. If we *show* our love for another on a regular basis there is no need to *prove* our love once in a while.

I. The Lord is not asking his disciples to *prove* their love for him. He is asking them to *show* their love by respecting him and following his commandments. That leads, not to a reward, but to *more* of God’s presence. More grace and strength because of the

Holy Spirit. In the gospels of the past two weeks we are back at the Last Supper with the Lord and his disciples. I wonder if for John, this was as good as or better than the day on the mountain when the Lord was transfigured. For *five* chapters, John lovingly recalls this wonderful evening before the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord crashed it. Most of it was the Lord preparing his friends for his leaving them. In these five chapters the Lord gave them the example of service by washing their feet. He prayed to the Father for them. He gave them the food of the Eucharist so that every time they gathered for that meal he was truly present with them. He knew they would feel abandoned; like orphans. He told them he was going to prepare a place for them and return for them. He told them he would always be with them and not just in their

memories, but also in a new and an incredible way – another Advocate, the Holy Spirit that would fill them with his presence. There was no way they could really understand it at that moment.

It was difficult to explain how this Advocate, the Holy Spirit, would overcome the disciples and fill them with power and strength. They would only know it on Pentecost.

Concl. My mother is not physically here, but there is an abiding presence of her in me. Her wisdom and her work ethic. Her humor (she once put this rubber eyeball in my Christmas stocking and I thought it was an orange). All remain in me and show up regularly twenty-five years later. She is still giving life to me. Though Lord is no longer physically among us, there are moments when his presence is palpable, clearly felt. We celebrate the important

times of birth, adulthood, and even death in moments we call sacraments that help us to recognize the presence of God among us again. Periodically we feel the absence of God; usually it is we who have moved, not God. In the past eight weeks we have felt absence of each other at Mass and the absence of the Lord in the Eucharist. We can do all the virtual Masses and spiritual Communions we want but what is missing is our presence together and the Lord's presence with us. Maybe one of the enduring memories of our time apart is to cherish what we have again: the Eucharist and to do what that means, give thanks for the Lord's presence with us. And show we love the Lord by continuing to do his will until this crisis is over.

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