

IF YOU DON'T KEEP MY WORD THEN YOU DON'T LOVE ME

As Jesus prepares to leave His disciples, He knows that they are fearful. He assures them that He will return. His farewell includes a gift of peace, even though this is on the eve of His crucifixion and death, He is at peace knowing He will rise from the dead. This is lesson for us. This is the very centre of Jesus' mission. He is saying that we should not let those fears come to dominate or define our lives, because He is always with us and with Him is His peace. We have to trust Him. The Gospel today (Jn 14:23-29) takes place on the evening before Jesus' death. He tells them that His Words and teachings are not His own, but come from His Father. Jesus is the mind of God, because He is God in the flesh. Jesus explains that the divine peace He gives us is a peace that the world cannot give. This is His gift to us, which is the Church, here on earth. Many people sadly look for peace in all the wrong places. Satan pretends to offer peace but it is only a pretentious form of peace and never lasts. Jesus' peace is not something temporary, it is eternal and internal. It is a deep-rooted serenity that flows from being united with God.

Jesus tells us that, 'If anyone loves Me he will keep My Word, and my Father will love him.' In other words, if we reject Jesus' teachings here on earth, then we have already made the decision to reject the call to join Him in heaven for all eternity. No one can be ready for the next life unless they train themselves for it now. So we praise God during our earthly life, and at the same time we make our petitions and sacrifices to Him. Our choices made here in this world will have everlasting consequences that will affect us in the next world. We should let the Holy Spirit, our Advocate and Helper, guide and influence our way of thinking now. Jesus will return to us at the Second Coming, in order to Judge us. We should be prepared spiritually for this most important day.

Many Catholics say they believe in Jesus Christ, but yet, they do not go to Mass. This is not keeping His Word, because He asks us to go to Mass every Sunday, in memory of Him, and all that He has done for us in providing resurrection from our own deaths. Those who reject Mass prove that they do not love Jesus. If the Truth be told, they do not believe in God, who sent His only Son into the world. They will not fool Jesus on the day of Judgement. To believe is to fully practice the faith. Not our own faith but the faith that Jesus gives us in baptism. This faith is the key to unlock the gates of heaven beyond the grave. To lose our Christian faith here on earth is to lose the keys of heaven. The Catholic Church is like a holy City. It is a piece of heaven here on earth. To reject the Church is to reject God and all the wonderful gifts He bestows upon us, especially the inheritance of eternal life. As members of the Church we are a family to be united in the Word of God. In the first reading, (Acts 15: 1-2,22-29), we are presented with the history of the early Church with its challenges of division based on traditional matters. Yet the communities stood firm and connected to Christ the Cornerstone, allowing themselves to be guided by the Spirit of Truth. To get to heaven, we must live as one with Christ here on earth. It is time to ponder on our future and to prioritise our beliefs and put them into action. If we love Jesus then we will keep His commandments. It is never too late to change and start anew by going to confession, inviting God back to make His home within us, and receive that peace He speaks about today. God bless, Fr. Brendan.