

Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 17, 2015

“Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one.”

- Most of us have had the experience of having to move
 - We have had to leave where we were in order to go someplace else
 - Sometimes far away, sometimes not so far
 - It is hard to leave when we have been in a place, made a life, made friends, etc...
- This is the sentiment that Jesus shares today in the Gospel
 - Even though the Ascension was celebrated this past Thursday, we have with us a part of Jesus' final prayer before He is arrested and the passion begins
 - These words are also most likely His human feelings just before He Ascends back to the Father
- There is a lesson in these words
 - Whenever we cannot control what is happening around us
 - Be it with an impending move
 - Or family members or friends
 - Or illness
 - Or whatever life may throw at us
 - We can ALWAYS place it in the hands of Our Father
 - When we are leaving friends, we can entrust them to the care of God the Father
 - When we cannot be around our family for whatever reason- we can do the same thing
 - When we are ill or suffering... this is the time when Jesus Himself is most closely with us, if we allow Him to be
 - As we know, He endured more suffering and pain than most of us could ever imagine
 - Even through that, He trusted in His Father... who is also our Father
 - When He did that, His Father did not take away the suffering, but He did give Jesus something more... eternal glory
- Human Suffering
 - Many time people ask and wonder why God allows suffering in the world
 - I have heard things like, “If He loves us, why do we have to suffer?” and “How can a loving God allow disasters, war, etc...?”
 - The simple fact of the matter is that suffering comes from 2 types of issues:
 - Consequences of bad human choices
 - Natural events

- The first, consequences of bad human choices, actually accounts for most of the suffering in the world
 - Human beings have incredible capacities
 - We can be innovative, loving, world-changing in bringing out the best in each other
 - Or... we can be most brutal, greedy and world destructing
- When human beings are at their worst, suffering inevitably results
 - God does not will that we suffer, but He DID promise that He would be with us... and proved that at Pentecost with the sending of the Holy Spirit
 - He also promised us that if we remain in Him we would share in His glory after the suffering ended
- As for the other types of suffering, under these fall natural disasters, illness, etc...
 - While some disasters are human based, most of them result from natural weather patterns in the earth
 - In the same way, God did not promise that we would be free from suffering, but that He would be with us
- All we have to do is let Him be with us and place it into the hands of our Father
- Jesus gives us a great example in His prayer in today's Gospel
 - No matter what is happening, place whatever care, illness or suffering into the hands of the Father
 - We have His guarantee that, while it might not be immediately taken away, He will be with us to the end