**Homily for the 6th Sunday of Easter***Rev. Francis D. Kim*

        In today’s Gospel reading from the 15th chapter of St. John’s Gospel, we are at the Last Supper, and Jesus gives His last farewell discourse. Now, we hear the last will and testimony of Jesus. Here, Jesus speaks about two things: our relationship to Him and our relationship to others.

        He speaks first about our relationship with Him. “I am the true vine, you are the branches.” It was las Sunday’s Gospel. This is our first priority, the source of our life as Christians. We are in Jesus, and He is in us always.

        And, today’s Gospel speaks about our relationships with others. Jesus says, “Love one another as I have loved you.” It sounds so simple. But, it is very difficult.

        The word ‘love’ is used to mean many different things. We say that we ‘love’ the car that we have just bought or that we ‘love’ a particular vacation spot or that we ‘love’ a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. We also ‘love’ a certain television program, and we ‘love’ our husband or wife. Hopefully, you don’t love your spouse the same way you love a peanut butter and jelly sandwich!

        The Greek word for ‘love’ that Jesus used implies action. It is not a passive word; it is an action word. The greatest love of all is God’s love for us, a love that showed itself in action. Jesus says, “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” That is real love!

        We are to love by our actions. So, here, Jesus is commanding us to love others, even those we don’t particularly like. Christian love is a decision, a commitment to do whatever will serve a person’s spiritual benefit, whether we like that person or not.

        If we love only people we like, Jesus asks, “How is that love distinctively Christian? Even the worst of Pharisees love those they like.” Remember. Without love we are nothing.

        And then, Jesus calls us friends. “You are my friends,” Jesus says. Jesus always acts like a best friend. He revealed Himself to us, He listened to our pains and sorrow, He helped us in our need, and sacrificed Himself out of love for us. So, Jesus says that we should love one another as He has loved us.

        Then, Jesus promises us joy. “My joy may be in you, and your joy might be complete.” Great joy comes from the love of a friend. We know this joy when we give love.

        When we reach out involve to others, joy is released in our lives. Christ promises, and it is our human experience. God has not called us to ‘in-reach’, He has called us to ‘out-reach.’                        Don’t wait until you feel like doing something loving; start doing it now on purpose. Love is a decision to seek the spiritual good of another whether we like them or not. If we wait for some people to become likable, we might wait forever.

        Loving is not always easy, but it is what we are called to do. Jesus promises, “Whatever you ask the Father in my name, He may give you.”

        When we struggle with loving another person who irritates, we might look at the God’s love for us. No matter what we may have done, He cares for us, supports and forgives us. This kind of love has great power to transform our world and great power to transform our lives. That is a mission that can fill and fulfill a lifetime. Then, what will you do today to show God’s love by your action?

        As we continue this Mass, let us consider how can we love one another. We should love those who are difficult to love. We should love those who are different from us.

        Jesus says today, “I chose you.” We choose our friends, and Christ chose us as friends. Jesus says, “I command you: love one another.” We are to do as Jesus did, chose a friend, love our friends, and be a friend.

        The result, the greatest happiness possible, complete joy. Remember. “Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.”