

## Homily for 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Can you list the U.S. presidents who have served in your lifetime? How about the five wealthiest people in the world? Any chance you know the last five Heisman Trophy winners, or Miss America winners, or Nobel Prize winners? Fame is fleeting, isn't it? Those who are "famous" today are forgotten tomorrow.

Love, on the other hand, is forever. Who of us can forget the people who have touched our lives...parents, teachers, mentors, special friends?

Jesus was not about fame...He was about love. He was the incarnation of love itself. Jesus was about bringing God's love into our lives. And He did this by laying down His own life for us... "No greater love can you have than to lay down your life for your friends."

Today's Gospel is Christ's instruction on love -- on receiving God's love and on living God's love. And in this tender instruction Christ gives us the gift of peace...a deep and abiding peace...a peace that rests on the knowledge that God is very near to us.

God is near to us in the Spirit who dwells in our hearts and who teaches and leads us in our life of faith. And it is the Spirit of God who renews in our hearts the gift of God's love when we struggle, or question,

or are overcome with the difficulties and disappointments that we often experience in our day-to-day living. With the Spirit there is no burden that is too cumbersome, no challenge that is insurmountable, and no human heart that could not be led to peace amidst the tempest of life. When trouble comes, and it will, the Spirit of Christ's promise is poured forth all the more. It is that Spirit of God that leads us to that new heaven and new earth that St. John so wonderfully speaks of in today's second reading.

And it is God's love given to us first so that we might be empowered to bring that same love to each other.