

“Completely One”

John 17:20-26

20 May 2007, Easter 7C

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John 17:20-26

”I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

“Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Prayer.

This past Thursday
marked the liturgical day of Ascension;
the occasion when Jesus is lifted up
and swept into the air,
leaving his disciples behind,
and ascending to be seated
at the right hand of the Heavenly Father.
Traditionally, the Church
has used this period
between Ascension and Pentecost
as a time to pray
for the coming of the Holy Spirit.
What gifts of the Spirit
does our faith community need most?
One scholar questions further,
“What gifts of the Spirit
does our world community need most?
What do we need from the Spirit today
to address the problems of our world?
What should we pray for?
(with thanks to Fr. John Bucki, SJ, Education

for Justice, as found at:

<http://educationforjustice.org/bin/view.fpl/1413.html>

Should we be praying about
how to address global warming?
Perhaps we should be praying
that the Spirit will guide the
marathon presidential campaign process?
How about praying for the Holy Spirit
to bring together the president and the congress
to heal the partisan divide?

What should we pray for?

Should we be praying about Iraq;
The 3,448 soldiers killed,
the 25,225 soldiers wounded
(As reported at:
http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/iraq_casualties.htm),
the 70,023 Iraqi civilians killed
by US-led military interventions
(As reported at:
<http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/>),
the millions killed, wounded, or displaced

members of society affected by the war?
Should we ask that the Spirit intercede
to stop the violence,
to end oppression,
to bring peace,
and to even the scales of justice?
How about asking the Spirit for the means
to bring healing to broken bodies and minds,
fractured families,
mourning widows,
and grief wrought children?

What should we pray for?
Should we pray for Roy Brown;
a man held for 15 years in state prison
even though he was innocent
and it took DNA evidence to free him?
While in prison
Roy was diagnosed with a liver disease
and not eligible to be placed on the transplant
list.
Newly freed, Roy received his transplant
at Strong this past week.
Should we pray for Roy
and others like him
who, despite our criminal justice system's best
efforts,
are being wrongly convicted and held?
Perhaps we should pray
that the Spirit would give us gifts to reach out
to
Bobbie Bryant,
who has been afraid to leave her house
on Locust Street in Rochester.
"We're just overwhelmed...
held prisoners in our own home," she said.
"I have two grandchildren
and last year we didn't spend any time
outside in our back or front yard,
because there were gun shots and fights
every single day."
(As found at:
[http://www.13wham.com/news/local/story.aspx
?content_id=473c7c53-d713-4468-856d-
bfc3d0a42723](http://www.13wham.com/news/local/story.aspx?content_id=473c7c53-d713-4468-856d-bfc3d0a42723))

What should we pray for?
Many will recall the plaintive call
of Rodney King,
the man whose vicious beating
by members of the Los Angeles police
department
was caught on video.
Mr. King cried out,
"Why can't we all just get along?"

What should we pray for?
Possibly, we should pray for our parish,
our members and friends
who face the uncertainty of
cancer, heart disease,
dementia, or digestive diseases?
May be we should ask the Spirit
to intercede on our behalf?
We would like a cure, at best,
but actually, we'll take anything
God can provide.
Perhaps we should pray for direction
for our faith community,
for the Spirit to guide us
to fish in other seas?
We are a great, worshipping, praising,
praying, missional parish,
but, lets face it,
we are somewhat adrift
in spite of our hospitality and benevolence
and the Holy Spirit could provide
just the jump-start we need
to enter into a new era of ministry.

What should we pray for?
Pope John 23rd wrote in 1963
in his missal "Pacem in Terris, #171"
or "Peace on Earth"
these words:
"May Christ inflame
the desires of all people
to break through the barriers which divide
them,
to strengthen the bonds of mutual love,
to learn to understand one another,

and to pardon those who have done them wrong.

Through Christ's power
and inspiration
may all peoples
welcome each other to their hearts
as brothers and sisters,
and may the peace they long for
ever flower
and ever reign
among them.

John the 23rd got it right
in his reflection
upon our Gospel of Good News.

We should ask

for what Jesus asks:

“that (we) may all be one”
that we might be so in Christ
and Christ so in the Father
that we become indivisible
one from another.

Break down every barrier!

Is it gender or sexuality?

Is it race, culture, or belief?

Is it inequalities of wealth, power, or influence?

Break down every barrier!

Strengthen the bonds of love that make us strong.

Just about every serious student of scripture
must agree that

if there is a common

unifying theme regarding

the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus,

it is the centrality of love.

Love defines the man,

the Divine,

and his motivation.

Love describes the Spirit's ability

to influence our decisions.

Strengthen the bonds of love

because love is what makes us strong;

a love that anticipates every need

and makes every effort to meet the need

is the kind of Divine love that oozes from

scripture

the characteristics love of our Savior

and is the crown jewel,

the most important means by which

the world knows his disciples today.

Love is the catalyst for understanding.

When we learn to understand one another

pardon and forgiveness can follow;

it can flow like a mighty river

bringing healing to every conflict

and to every broken relationship.

What are we to pray for?

Pray that we might be one;

One with each other,

one with Christ,

and one with our God.

When that unity comes,

when we are all as one,

then and only then

will we achieve

perfect peace.

This, O Lord,

is our fervent prayer.

Amen.