

Thursday, Fifth Week of Eastertide.

John 15:9-11

In the previous chapter Jesus spoke about his own peace, a peace the world cannot give. Building on that in the Gospel reading today Jesus is speaking of his own joy. This too is to be understood as that kind of joy that the world cannot offer. Just as he wanted to share his own peace to his troubled and fearful disciples at the setting of the last supper, so he also wants to share his own joy to in his troubled and fearful disciples. Peace and joy are like the two sides of the same coin. Both are rooted in his sense of his Father's love for him. Just as the Father loves Jesus, so does he love his disciples. Jesus is offering this quality of joy not only to his disciples but to all of us, in the here and now, in this earthly life. It means that in the course of this very life, we can experience a foretaste of the love of God that we will know in eternal life. Followers of Our Lord today can already begin to experience something of the joy that awaits them in the kingdom of heaven. We tend to look for joy and happiness in all kinds things and places. Our human search for joy and happiness tends to be fruitless because it is looked for in the wrong things and places. Jesus assures us that true joy, a joy that the world cannot give, is to be found in a loving relationship with himself. We know that we are as deeply loved by him as he is loved by the Father. We ought to be disposed to share the love we have received with those around us. We ought to love one another as the Lord has loved us. We are called to remain in that love by opening our hearts to receive it and by allowing the love we have received to flow through us to other people. When that happens, the Lord's own joy will be in us and our joy will be complete.