

Sermon Outline
“We Are Not Alone” John 14:15-21

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 17th, 2020

Grace Lutheran Church and School

www.glcas.org

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The holy gospel according to **John 14:15-21**

Glory to you, O Lord.

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Let us pray:

Come Holy Spirit, our helper and advocate: Open our hearts and minds this Sunday, morning, entice us with your presence. Spark us with a word of Life—a message that we may share with others as we seek to live Christ’s love in the world. All this we ask in the name of God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us. Amen.

Every time I hear today's gospel passage, I am reminded of the motion picture "Home Alone" Kevin an 8-year-old who, through a series of mishaps, is left behind when his large family flies to Paris for the holidays.

Delightful at having the house to himself, he is soon interrupted by bickering home invaders Harry and Marv, and he will need all his smarts to outwit them. Here is the

storyline:

It is Christmas time, and the McCallister family is preparing for a vacation in Paris, France. But the youngest in the family, Kevin, got into a scuffle with his older brother Buzz and was sent to his room, which is on the third floor of his house.

Then, the next morning, while the rest of the family was in a rush to make it to the airport on time, they completely forgot about Kevin, who now has the house all to himself.

Being home alone was fun for Kevin, having a pizza all to himself, jumping on his parents' bed, and making a mess. Then, Kevin discovers about two burglars, Harry, and Marv, about to rob his house on Christmas Eve. Kevin acts quickly by wiring his own home with makeshift booby traps to stop the burglars and to bring them to justice.

While this is a funny story, most parents would disagree with the premise of the story: most parents leaving on holiday vacation and to forget their daughter or son; has it happened in the past, maybe.

For us, Christian, this story Home Alone is the perfect story of what our blessed Lord **Jesus would never, but never leaves us alone**. Our crucified and risen Lord will always be present for us; he will never leave us alone. Jesus, our Lord, will never leave us or leave us orphans.

In our Gospel text today, Jesus is having his last meal with the disciples. This is Jesus' attempt to prepare the disciples for what is coming.

The writer of John's gospel deliberately communicates with his audience that the meal Jesus is having is an extended conversation.

Jesus is teaching his disciples that he loves them, and they keep his commandments to live in the transformative power of love he will ask the Father to send them an advocate or the Holy Spirit or the paraclete.

When Jesus says **"those, who keep my commandment are those who love me."** Afterwards, Jesus gives his disciple a new commandment, "that they are to love one another as he has loved them."

Afterward's Jesus teaches his disciples that he is leaving however, **"he will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, that he may be with forever. I will not leave you orphans. God will give you the Holy Spirit or the "Parakletos"** which has several meanings: a lawyer who pleads your case, or a witness who testifies in your behalf.

The word **"Parakletos"** also implies someone can call on when you are in trouble or distress or bewildered. The writer of this maverick gospel, is communicating that the **"Parakletos"** will be with the disciples forever. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit will guide the disciples in all new things to come. Also, to encourage his followers, plus to remind them of Jesus and his teachings.

Jesus is teaching his disciples that he will not leave them alone, that he will always be with them. Jesus is giving his disciples a promise, and “I will always be with you, I will never leave you alone you will never be orphans, or parentless to care for you.”

The promise Jesus is giving his disciples is that even when the world cannot see him, people of faith will be able to. This promise is especially welcoming as we pray for ourselves also for the global community as the Coronavirus challenges us.

In times of devastation, we seek the presence of God to be with us, not be left abandoned, or leave us orphaned.

During the past three weeks, I have had several conversations with friends, family members, colleagues in the ministry, including Grace's family. Many feel left alone by God; many feel desolate or orphaned by the heart-rending loss of loved ones, or by the loss of personal finances.

Jesus promises that we are not alone, that we have an advocate at work on our behalf. In Psalm 66, the Psalmist proclaims that "God has kept us among the living and has not let our feet slip."

I am aware that there will be trials in life, and no human being is without pain together with life's challenges. But the Holy Gospel-The “**Paraclete**” reminds us that Jesus gives us a promise that he will always love us, that he will always be with us, that he will never leave us orphans. If Jesus gave us a promise, our blessed Lord Jesus will keep his word to us.

I would like to share a story with you I read this week about Emperor Penguins while, preparing my message for this Sunday

Emperor penguins are the largest of all penguins. They grow to be 3 feet high, now my friends that is a big bird. They live in Antarctica where it is very cold; mostly snow and ice. The way that Emperor penguins take care of their babies is quite interesting.

The mother penguin lays only one egg. She holds the egg on the tops of her feet to keep it off the ice. Before the egg is hatch, she carefully moves the precious egg to the top of the father's feet, so she is able to go into northern waters where there are fish for her to eat.

The father penguin cares for the egg while holding it on his feet. He tucks a loose flap of his skin over the egg to keep it warm so it will hatch. The father spends about two months sheltering the egg, making sure it does not get cold. During that time, the father penguin does not eat at all! He may lose up to-half of his body weight.

By the time the chick has hatched the mother penguin is back from her journey. The baby penguin is then moved back to its mother's feet, being careful to keep it off the ice. Can we see how much care is given to the egg and then chick? There is always a parent there to provide what is needed. Jesus is our parent who will always provide for us along with eternal care for us.

We will not be left orphans-children who do not have anyone to take of them. So, people of God let us remember we are not left alone, we have the **“Parakletos,”** the Holy Spirit with us. We are in Good hands with God.

Jesus lives in us, and we in him.

Dear saints of God, today we have Good News, since we have the love Christ in our lives along with the Holy Spirit. Today Christ comes to us with a word of healing for souls, body, and spirit. "The Promise of the Gospel" is that Christ is for us, Christ will make us well.

Equally important, the Holy Spirit binds us together. When we are together, we support each other; we pray for each other and lift each other with words of encouragement. The gift of the Holy Spirit makes God's presence real to us at Grace Lutheran Church and School.

My good friends, God will always love's us.
We have a Savior who triumphed over death.
We have the Holy Spirit, God's presence, to bring faith to life.

Sisters and brothers, we have the peace of God that passes all understanding to keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

I leave you with the words of Bob Marley's song "Three Little Birds"
"Don't worry about a thing
'Cause every little thing gonna be alright
Singing' "Don't worry about a thing
'Cause every little thing gonna be alright!"

Response to The Word:

Let us pray:
We will love as the Lord loves.
We will testify to the presence of God,
Through the Advocate, the Spirit.
We will prepare ourselves for times of suffering.
We will open our hearts in praise and thanksgiving.
God hears our prayers and heeds our call.
We are not rejected, for we are loved.

Benediction:

Go in the name of God, the one who created all the nations of the earth.
Go in the name of Christ, the one who abides in love and abides in you.
Go in the name of the Spirit of truth,
the one who advocates for you and guides you. Amen.