

The Helper will teach you all Things

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Pentecost) is John 14:23-31. The text belongs to the farewell discourses of Jesus spoken to the disciples on the eve of his death.

Jesus has told the disciples much in the three years he had been with them. But, there is much more that they need to know and since he is going back to heaven he is sending the Holy Spirit. Sent in Jesus' name, the Spirit is intimately linked to Jesus' words and work.

In our text the Holy Spirit is called "Helper." The word "Helper" is expressed uniquely in one language in Central Africa as "the one who falls down beside us," that is to say, an individual who upon finding a person collapsed along the road, kneels down beside the victim, cares for his needs, and carries him to safety" (J. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [New York: United Bible Societies, 1989] 1:142).

When Jesus says of the Holy Spirit "*he will teach you all things*" it has the sense of 16:13, 14, "he will guide you into all the truth," etc. We see the fulfillment of this promise in the apostolic epistles and in the hearts and minds of all who, like the 3000 at Pentecost, "continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching. It is still the underpinning for all that happens in Jesus' Church today.

The Holy Spirit in his teaching will "*bring to you remembrance all that I have said.*" It was crucial for the life of the church and for the writing of the NT. It is said that "Repetition is of Mother of learning." This is vital because of our sinfulness, we readily forget his Word and drift. It shows how well he knows us and how he will take care of our weaknesses.

The Holy Spirit is more than a substitute for Jesus. He brings his own particular gift, the gift of peace. As Jesus leaves his disciples, he gives them that which one parting wishes to leave with his loved ones. This is not a subjective feeling of peace. This is an objective peace, the peace Jesus has earned by his suffering, death, and resurrection, now to be delivered by the Holy Spirit. With this peace the disciples have nothing to fear, even though Jesus is about to continue his discourse and speak of the hatred that they are about to receive from the world

Jesus himself knew what it was like to be "troubled" in the world. With a loving and sensitive heart, he now sees the disciples' confusion and distress when he tells them of his departure. They fear being alone (14:1, 27). But the peace of Jesus will calm their troubled heart and alleviate their fear.

Jesus is giving them comfort and care by telling them what will happen or at least as much as they can handle at this point. More will be given them when past information begins to crystallize. There is a saying "If you care, you will communicate." Jesus models this perfectly.

Prayer: O Holy Spirit, draw me ever closer to my Savior, and focus me on His Word. Amen. (TLSB)