

6th Sunday of Easter

Acts 8:5-8, 14-17
Ps 66:1-7, 16, 20
1 Peter 3:15-18
John 14:15-21

Monday May 18

Acts 16:11-15
Ps 149:1b-6a,9b
John 15:26-16:4a

Tuesday May 19

Acts 16:22-34
Ps 138:1-3,7c-8
John 16:5-11

Wednesday May 20

Acts 17:15, 22-18:1
Ps 148:1-2,11-14
John 16:12-15

Thursday May 21

Acts 18:1-8
Ps 98:1-4
John 16:16-20
or **The Ascension**
Acts 1:1-11
Ps 47:2-3, 6-9
Ephesians 1:17-23
Matthew 28:16-20

Friday May 22

Acts 18:9-18
Ps 47:2-8a
John 16:20-23

Saturday May 23

Acts 18:23-28
Ps 47:2-3,8-10
John 16:23b-28

In John 14:15-21, Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit is our "Advocate". Some scholars translate the word to "Counselor". In the original Greek, it means "called alongside". It's closely related to the verb "parakaleo" ("to call" or "summon") from which we get "Paraclete" as a name for the Holy Spirit. It referred to a legal assistant, a courtroom advocate.

Jesus is telling us that the Holy Spirit is our legal assistant when we're falsely accused, misjudged, or wrongly condemned.

Notice that Jesus refers to our Advocate as the "Spirit of Truth". No matter what other people think about us, no matter what wrong things they say about us, no matter what opinions they have of us, God always knows the truth. And the truth that sets us free from their bad attitudes is this: It's only God's opinion that really matters. And his opinion of us is better than we think it is!

We judge ourselves more harshly than we should, and

this is why we worry so much about how others are judging us. If we honestly examine our consciences, seek reconciliation with God for our sins during the Penance Rite at Mass or in the Sacrament of Confession, and strive to improve, then Jesus says to us what he said to other sinners: "I do not condemn you; go and sin no more."



Don't you sometimes wish Jesus would come physically to your rescue when you're misjudged? He said that he will not leave us orphaned – his Holy Spirit will always be with us when we need to be defended, telling us the truth about our goodness.

Even when we sin, the Spirit of Truth defends us to our heavenly Judge: "Look, this precious child really does want to be holy." To us, the Spirit says, "Let me teach you how to grow in holiness and avoid this sin." And to others, the Spirit says: "If you love me, love this good friend of mine."

Reflect & Discuss:

1. How have you been unjustly accused and unfairly judged? Imagine what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Father about that. And to those who condemned you. And what is he saying to you about you?
2. Describe a time when God defended you. How did the Advocate manifest his help?
3. Who learned more from it: you or your accusers?