Wednesday of the Seventh Week of Easter

Gospel text (*Jn* 17:11b-19): Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus prayed, saying: “Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one. When I was with them I protected them in your name that you gave me, and I guarded them, and none of them was lost except the son of destruction, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

But now I am coming to you. I speak this in the world so that they may share my joy completely. I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the Evil One. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth.”

“They may share my joy completely”

Fr. Thomas LANE
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Today, we live in a world which does not know how to be truly happy with the happiness of Jesus, a world which seeks the happiness of Jesus in all the wrong places and in the wrong ways. Seeking happiness without Jesus only leads to deeper unhappiness. Just look at the soaps on TV, there is always somebody in trouble. The soaps on TV show us the misery of a godless life.

But we want to live this day with the joy of Jesus. Jesus prayed to his Father in our Gospel today, “I speak this in the world so that they may share my joy completely” (Jn 17,13). Notice that Jesus wants his joy to be complete in us. He wants us to be full of his joy. This does not mean that we will not have crosses, for “the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world” (Jn 17,14), but Jesus expects us to live with his joy no matter what the world thinks of us. The joy of Jesus is to permeate us to our very core while the superficial rumblings of a godless world should not penetrate us.

Today then let us live with the joy of Jesus. How can we acquire more and more of this joy of Jesus?

Obviously from Jesus himself, Jesus is the only one who gives us the true joy that the world is lacking as we see in the soaps on TV. Jesus said, “If you remain in me and my words in you, you may ask whatever you want and it will be given to you” (Jn 15,7). Then let us spend time each day in prayer with the words of Jesus in the Scriptures, let us eat and consume the words of Jesus in the Scriptures, let them be our food, so that we may be satiated with the joy of Jesus: “Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon.” (Benedict XVI).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “The whole community of the faithful, once begotten in the baptismal font, was crucified with Christ in the passion, raised up with him in the resurrection, so too it is born with him in this Nativity” (Saint Leo the Great)

- “Today too, in the Gospel, we heard Jesus’ prayer on the eve of his passion: ‘that they may be one, even as we are one’. From this eternal love between the Father and the Son, poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, our mission and our fraternal communion draw strength” (Francis)

- “The prayer of the hour of Jesus, rightly called the ‘priestly prayer’ (cf Jn 17), sums up the whole economy of creation and salvation. It fulfills the great petitions of the Our Father” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, № 2758)