



## May 22, 2011 Fifth Sunday of Easter

*Jesus told him: "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me..." John 14:6*

Dear Friends;

There was a beggar who came each week to beseech a wealthy benefactor for charity. Every week the rich man would listen to his tale of woe and graciously doled out a generous gift. One day the rich man said to the beggar, "Listen, you know that I will continue giving you a nice amount every week. You don't have to convince me any more. A little less cringing, a little less whining and would both of us would be happier." The beggar drew himself up to the full stature of his ragged pride and dignity. "My good sir," he replied indignantly, "I don't presume to tell you how to be a millionaire; please don't tell me how to be a beggar."

Today's Gospel invites us to ask ourselves do we try and tell God how to run the world or are we willing to let God through Jesus invite us to a new way of seeing things—as God does—through the eyes of love. Scholar, John Dominic Crossan translates John 14:6 as "I am the authentic (truth) vision (way) of existence (life)."

This passage comes from Jesus' farewell address to his disciples. Everything that Jesus has done in this Gospel is to demonstrate love. He is the model of an "authentic vision of human existence." To follow his example is to find meaning in my and your life. And everything comes to be measured by the authenticity of love.

What would our world look like if we measured it by love rather than the other measures our society uses to value things such as profit and productivity?

Lately, I have been pondering the question, why do we have the economic system that we do? What is the purpose of stock and commodity markets? Do they serve a purpose or are they just casinos where those who avoid paying taxes at all costs gamble on the things that everyone else needs to survive? Why is it we are paying billions in subsidies to petroleum companies when their profits continue to skyrocket? Why are the poor and middle class whose salaries are no way benefiting from profits of the mega-corporations left paying more of their static salaries to survive?

What if we applied the measure of love to our economic systems? Would not Main Street be just as important as Wall Street? Would we not see paying taxes as part of what it means to live in a civil society? Would not those who have more realize that they have a responsibility to pay more? Would we not see the poor, immigrants, the undocumented, the unborn and those in need of medical coverage as the face of Christ?

To ask oneself such questions is what it means to try and follow Christ who is our authentic vision of human existence. And without the radical love that is Jesus in our hearts our lives amount to a gigantic waste of time. He is the way—follow him!

Peace,

*Fr Ron*