

Fifth Sunday of Lent – March 21, 2021

Jeremiah 31: 31-34 – Hebrew 5: 7-9 – John 12: 20-31

The theme during the Season of Lent this year has emphasized the friendship that our God seeks with mankind, seeks with us. This union with God has been signified by the covenants or agreements between God and humanity. These covenants, described in the Scriptures, relied on external signs: a rainbow in the case of Noah, innumerable descendants and land in the case of Abraham, the Commandments or Law given on Sinai in the case of Moses. A new covenant between God and mankind was described by the prophet, Jeremiah. This new covenant would depend on the interior disposition of a person. No longer was what was on the outside sufficient, what was in the interior of the individual was even more important. In the words of Jeremiah, the relationship will be written on our hearts. It will effect the whole of us, not superficially, but to the very depths of who we are.

A relationship between God and ourselves is a very real possibility because Christ Jesus, when he was in the flesh. When he was one of us he was willing to accept the call of the loving Father to give of himself totally in his death on the cross. So much does God love us that Christ was crucified so that we might be reconciled with God..

Acknowledging the depth of God's love that is realized by commitment Christ and reflecting that acknowledgment in our manner of living makes us like the seed that is planted in the

ground. What is on the surface of us must die, must be removed, so that the potential to grow and to blossom, to bear fruit is happens.

As it was with Jesus, so it is with us: a demanding task that is not easily accomplished. If, in our lives, God is to be honored and praised by how we reflect God in the choices we make, then we must be totally committed . It cannot be halfway. There cannot be half measures. We must contemplate the example of Christ giving himself totally for us all.

What enables us and encourages us to do this is the awareness that the cross was not the end. His crucifixion did not end the mission of Christ. It was his dying on the cross that led to the Resurrection. The Cross made the Resurrection possible. Just as planting the seed makes the flower possible.

God, in the covenants which were made in the past, as well as in the covenant that is written on our hearts through our baptism, continues to seek a loving relationship with each of us. We have focused during this Season of Lent on a consideration of the depth of God's love for us as demonstrated in the covenants made by God with mankind. As we prepare, in the weeks to come, to renew our Baptismal covenant, may we do so with renewed commitment to and trust in our good and gracious God.