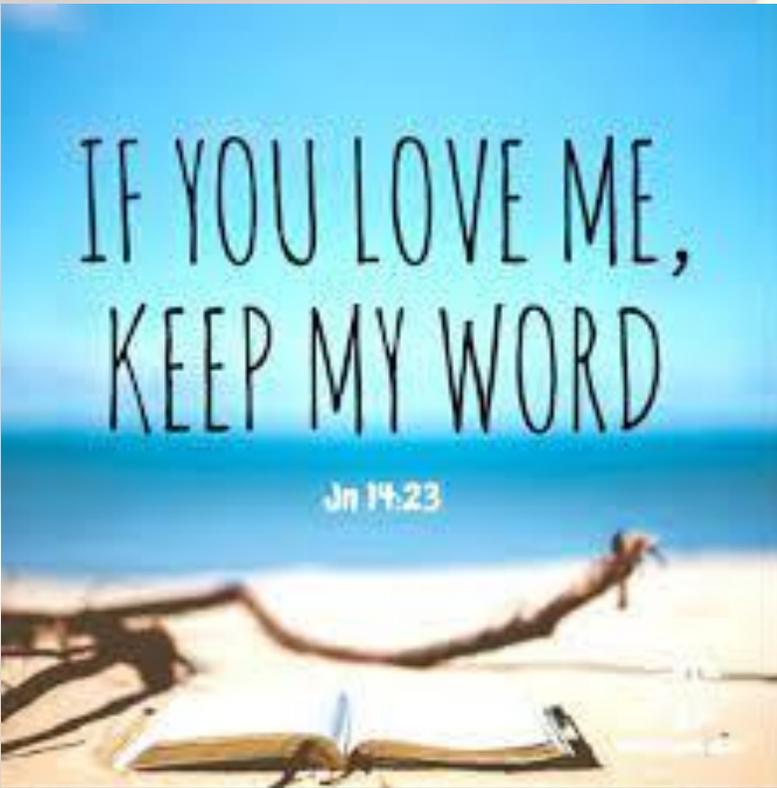




Prayers for the Week Ahead

WEEK BEGINNING 16TH MAY

Monday 16th May



Today's Gospel (Jn. 14:21-26):

Jesus said, 'They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.'.. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.'

Reflection:

Do I think often enough about the Holy Spirit, that great gift from the Father to me, which Jesus talks about in today's Gospel? Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will teach me everything. This is a big promise! Do I rely on it? Do I turn to the Holy Spirit in moments of difficulty - especially difficulty in matters of faith - and ask the Spirit for guidance?

Have I ever experienced the guidance of the Holy Spirit in a moment of difficulty? Take a moment to recall that moment (or moments) now, and I thank God for this great gift. Perhaps I can consciously call upon the Spirit now to ask for guidance in some present difficulty.

Hail Mary...

Fifth Week of Eastertide

Tuesday 17th May



Fifth Week of Eastertide

Today's Gospel (Jn. 14:27-31):

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, "I am going away, and I am coming to you." If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I.

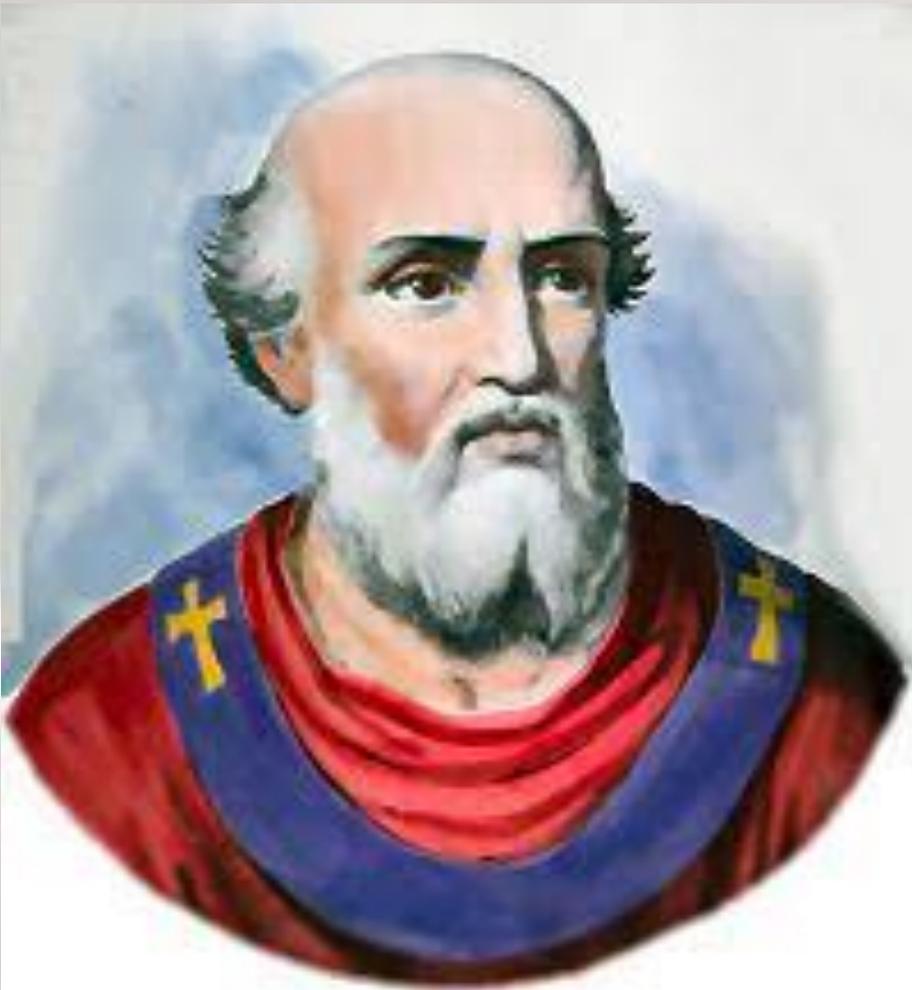
Reflection:

Jesus speaks from the depths of his heart to his dearest friends. He is facing into his Passion. He wants his friends to know that he is with them, his father is with them. Jesus' farewell wish is 'Peace!' His gift of peace is not a state, but a relationship. It is the fruit of deeply abiding in him. This relationship will never fail. It will enable the disciples to endure suffering and rejection.

The peace that Jesus gives is available to me; I have to do nothing to receive it. But maybe that's the problem - I want to do something to earn what Jesus offers as a free gift. Lord, help me to do nothing in this time of prayer but to be ready to receive what you offer.

Hail Mary...

Wednesday 18th May



Pope John I inherited the Arian heresy, which denied the divinity of Christ. Italy had been ruled for 30 years by an emperor who espoused the heresy, though he treated the empire's Catholics with toleration. His policy changed at about the time the young John was elected pope. When the eastern emperor began imposing severe measures on the Arians of his area, the western emperor forced John to head a delegation to the East to soften the measures against the heretics. Little is known of the manner or outcome of the negotiations—designed to secure continued toleration of Catholics in the West. On his way home, John was imprisoned at Ravenna because the emperor had begun to suspect that John's friendship with his eastern rival might lead to a conspiracy against his throne. Shortly after his imprisonment, John died, apparently from the treatment he received in prison. John's body was transported to Rome and he was buried in the Basilica of St. Peter.

Reflection:

We cannot choose the issues for which we have to suffer and perhaps die. John I suffered because of a power-conscious emperor. Jesus suffered because of the suspicions of those who were threatened by his freedom, openness, and powerlessness. "If you find that the world hates you, know it has hated me before you" (John 15:18).

Hail Mary...

St Pope John 1st

Thursday 19th May

The true strength of my life.
Is found in the love that
JESUS
has for me.

John 15:9-11

Today's Gospel (Jn. 15:9-11):

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete."

Reflection:

Jesus tells us that we must keep "his" commandments. Think of one of them "Love your enemies", "Turn the other cheek", "Take up your cross every day"

Jesus didn't issue commandments to control and dominate us but offer them as paths to true happiness. His sole intention is that "my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11). The mark of a true Christian then surely is joy. There is no purpose in setting out to love others, without first trusting in how much loved we are ourselves. That is how Jesus went about it, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you". We need to abide in Jesus's love to learn how we are to love others.

Hail Mary...

Fifth Week of Eastertide

Friday 20th May



Like Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro, SJ, Cristóbal and his 24 companion martyrs lived under a very anti-Catholic government in Mexico, one determined to weaken the Catholic faith of its people. Churches, schools, and seminaries were closed; foreign clergy were expelled. Cristóbal established a clandestine seminary at Totatiche, Jalisco. He and the other priests were forced to minister secretly to Catholics during the presidency of Plutarco Calles (1924-28). All of these martyrs except three, were diocesan priests. David, Manuel and Salvador were laymen who died with their parish priest, Luis Batis. They all belonged to the Cristero movement, pledging their allegiance to Christ and to the Church that he established, to spread the Good News in society—even if Mexico’s leaders had made it a crime to receive baptism or celebrate the Mass. These martyrs did not die as a single group but over 22 years time in eight Mexican states, with Jalisco and Zacatecas having the largest number. They were beatified in 1992 and canonized eight years later.

Reflection:

Every martyr realizes how to avoid execution, but refuses to pay the high price of doing so. A clear conscience was more valuable than a long life. We may be tempted to compromise our faith while telling ourselves that we are simply being realistic, dealing with situations as we find them. Is survival really the ultimate value? Do our concrete, daily choices reflect our deepest values, the ones that allow us to “tick” the way we do? Anyone can imagine situations in which being a follower of Jesus is easier than the present situation. Saints remind us that our daily choices, especially in adverse circumstances, form the pattern of our lives.

*Saint Cristobal Magallanes
and his companions*