

**Reflection for 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter – 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – Year A –  
John 17:1 – 17**

It is sometimes very good to read different Bible translations. Earlier this week when I read today's passage from the John's Gospel account, I was struck by a couple of words. 'The Glory' and 'eternal life'. I knew their meaning but wanted to see if a new insight, understanding would emerge, and so I turned to another translation called 'The Message'. So let's hear it:

"Jesus said these things. Then, raising his eyes in prayer, he said:

*Father, it's time.*

*Display the bright splendour of your Son  
so the Son in turn may show your bright splendour.*

*You put him in charge of everything human  
so he might give real and eternal life to all in his charge.*

*And this is the real and eternal life:*

*that they know you,  
the one and only true God,  
and Jesus Christ, whom you sent.*

*I glorified you on earth  
by completing down to the last detail  
what you assigned me to do.*

*And now, Father, glorify me with your very own splendour,  
the very splendour I had in your presence  
before there was a world.*

*I spelled out your character in detail  
to the men and women you gave me.*

*They were yours in the first place;  
then you gave them to me,  
and they have now done what you said.*

*They know now, beyond the shadow of a doubt,  
that everything you gave me is first-hand from you,*

*for the message you gave me, I gave them;  
and they took it, and were convinced  
that I came from you.  
They believed that you sent me.  
I pray for them.  
I'm not praying for the God-rejecting world  
but for those you gave me,  
for they are yours by right.  
Everything mine is yours, and yours mine,  
and my life is on display in them.  
For I'm no longer going to be visible in the world;  
they'll continue in the world  
while I return to you.  
Holy Father, guard them as they pursue this life  
that you conferred as a gift through me,  
so they can be one heart and mind  
as we are one heart and mind."*

You may have noticed that the word 'glory' which means 'the presences of God', has been replaced with the word 'splendour'. So in the Message translation, more modern or more understandable words used, are helping us to catch perhaps a bit easier the gist of what Jesus wanted his disciples to understand only hours before his crucifixion.

In his prayer, Jesus wanted two things to be absolutely clear. Firstly, that the people would know God through his life and ministry. Secondly, that his life and ministry is a window into God's saving love. Jesus prayed that people would come to know God through him. That is the meaning of the phrase 'eternal life'. The eternal life means to know God and Jesus Christ.

Do you know God and Jesus Christ? Do you know how they have changed your life?

On Thursday evening we celebrated Jesus' Ascension, his returning back home to his Father and entered into between season of Ascension before Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Instead the usual reading about Jesus' ascension from Luke's Gospel, we heard from the end of the Matthew's Gospel, where Jesus send his disciples to proclaim the kingdom of God to all and everywhere. The Great Commissioning as that sending is also called, is one aspect of the life that changes when the person becomes to know God and Jesus Christ. Knowing God and Jesus Christ is something that will change us and our lives.

Do you know God and Jesus Christ? Do you know how they have changed your life?

Each one of us could tell our personal 'how I know God and Jesus'-story. Each one of us could tell how 'knowing' came about through another person – whether through bad or good experience with them. And each one of us could tell how we began to walk towards the new reality, new life. And as we have been journeyed, we've come to realise how this new life and reality is beginning to be shaped by God's forever and eternal vision for LOVE, JUSTICE and SERVICE, in our relationships with others and in our communities.

This is still the truth. Despite of our current situation. Despite of our hardships and problems. Despite of the Covid-19. What matters most is that we know God and Jesus Christ. We know the glory and the splendour, the presence of God and have the eternal life. And from knowing God and Jesus, comes our calling to help others to know them through our love and service.

So let us pray for those whom we have chosen to pray these days of season of Ascension. Let us pray in knowing that the kingdom of God is here and now with us and that the renewal of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost will continue to help us to endure all that we are faced with today, tomorrow and weeks and months ahead of us.

**Amen.**