

## The Spirit Will Lead You Into All Truth

4 May, 2016

Reading: John 16:12-15

One of the hard things about the earthquakes has been that it has forced a number of us to give up our homes. Even if you haven't been affected, you will know someone who has. In the same way, as people get older, the decision to give up one's home can be hard and loaded with grief.

Today is the eve of the Ascension and the reading holds a promise which Jesus gave to his disciples before he ascended. He promised that the Spirit would come and lead them into all truth.

The disciples had gotten used to Jesus being with them. Even after his resurrection he appeared to them a number of times. He was on the beach and made them breakfast. He appeared behind locked doors. He was on the road with them and they recognised him in the breaking of bread. But the Ascension marks the time when he was no longer with them physically.

Jesus had to ascend so that he could be available to everyone. No longer was he to be limited by time and space but would be there 'in all times and in all places', as we say in the liturgy. Indeed we can know Jesus is closer than our own breath.

So, how close is Jesus to us now? He made a statement that the Holy Spirit would make it possible for God to come and make a home in us. What a remarkable statement! Imagine God being at home in us. This is a truth we need the help of the Holy Spirit to understand. For those of us who pray in silence, we know, at times, the truth of this statement. And the saints and mystics assert that there is a place deep within us where God is at home.

The challenge for us, is to make our hearts a place suitable for God to be at home. When we do, we discover the truth that we can be at home in any situation, because God is always with us.

Growing up, we always had a cat. There are two types of cats: people cats and place cats. Place cats taken from their home will go to all sorts of lengths to get back the place where they feel at home. I heard of one such cat. The family moved to Christchurch but the cat longed to be back in Hokitika. You guessed it. The cat walked home to Hokitika! True story. People cats, however, are at home as long as they have the right people around them. Our cat was a people cat. She was called Pooh-Bah after the Lord High Executioner in The Mikado. Pooh-Bah came on holiday with us so she could be with us wherever we were. The trouble with having a cat called Pooh-Bah

is when you go outside to call her, you go “Pooh ... Pooh ...” and the neighbours wonder what you are up too.

I think one of the truths that Holy Spirit is drawing us into is that we need to be people people. We need to be at home wherever we are. We need to be at home with our God. One day we will have to make our home with God forever, so it's a good idea to have God at home with us now.

In ‘Quaky Cat’, a children’s book that I’ve used to help explain the earthquakes, the conclusion reads: *For a home’s not a roof or a chimney or stairs. It isn’t a cat door or tables and chairs... Home is the giving and helping and sharing. When a city is crumbling then home is the caring. Home is a lap where it's cosy and warm. Home is where love keeps you safe from the storm.*

My prayer for you is that you may know the love of God at home in you.