

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 9, a.D. 2010

John 16: 23 – 33

Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia

When kids are all lined up in order to pick teams, you already know who the best players are, and so don't you want to be on the team that has the best players? When adults want to invest their money, you wouldn't hand over your life savings to an incompetent moron. If you have been summoned to go to court, wouldn't you want the best legal counselor on your team?

Does this sort of thinking work for the spread of the Christian faith? Can you convince someone to believe in Jesus because he is the strongest, the wisest, or simply because he is God Almighty? Then the evangelism slogan runs like this: Come join our team because we have the most gifted player ever playing on our side! Don't you want to be on the winning side?

Doesn't Jesus himself teach us to pray Our Father who art in heaven, which means that our father sits on heaven's throne and is the strongest most powerful person and certainly can answer all our prayers and petitions?

There is a strong force pulling us to go straight to the source of power and cash in on the One who holds all things in the palm of his hand. It's not that much different a force that moves athletes to cheat in order to win. Injecting steroids, spying on the opponents to intercept their communication, ponzi schemes, insider trading or cheating on your taxes.

And so too the Christian. If we can tap into the strength of the One who rose from the dead, then there is unlimited power. Right?

Hear the living words of the One who rose from the dead: **In this world you will have trouble.** Is He saying that my life is going to be full of troubles just because I follow Him. But I want a trouble free life? Why should I follow Him?

But take heart good Christian. Your Saviour knows what it is that tries to pull you away from Him. Even Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane that the Father would take away the troubles that filled the cup that was pressed to His holy lips to drink. Jesus asked his heavenly father to remove the cup. The Father heard that prayer but did

not remove it. The Father wants all people to share his never-ending life with him and so he gave the bitter cup of all sin to his holy Son to drink for the healing of all the nations.

Now we pray to our heavenly father and have the confidence that he will hear all our prayers for the sake of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. To approach the father's glorious throne apart from the blood of Jesus means certain death. That's why only the child of God is confident that his prayers are heard, because of Jesus. God is our loving and merciful father through Jesus.

We shouldn't be afraid to ask God anything because of Jesus. Go ahead. Ask God to take that zit away before your big date. Or for the latest and greatest bit of technology, like the I pad or play station. In fact many of our petitions sound that way to our heavenly father because we are but children. We know that he is good and won't give us anything harmful. We know that he is in control not we. We know that he hears all our prayers and answers each one in the way that leads us to eternal life with him.

On this mother's day we have talked a lot about our heavenly father. But what a gift of God when a pious and devout mother teaches her child to pray and shares the reason to expect to be heard. Jesus. For Jesus is the only one who can give us peace from heaven. Peace between God and men. Peace in a trouble and collapsing world.

But take heart I have overcome the world!

I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace.