

HOMILY – April 27, 2008

6th Sunday of Easter – Cycle A

I believe one of the great musicals of all times is My Fair Lady and in the show there is a song that goes like this:

Don't talk of stars burning above,
If you're in love show me.
Haven't your lips yearned for my touch?
Don't say how much....show me.
Don't talk of love lasting through time,
Make me no undying vows... show me now.

Elizabeth Doolittle sang this right after she sang:

Words, Words, Words, I'm just sick of words!

I'm pretty sure that when she sang this song, she wasn't thinking of our Gospel today. But the title of the song fits: "If you're in Love, Show Me.

In essence, that is what Jesus was saying to his disciples. "He who obeys the commandments is the one who loves Me."

What does it mean to love Jesus? Most of us would probably assert that we do, but what does it mean?

"Honk if you love Jesus" doesn't really say much about love for the Lord. It's too easy. In fact, just saying the words, "I love Jesus" is, also, too easy.

Jesus was always linking actions to love and if the action wasn't there, He cared little for the words. Words, Words, Words! He is sick of words! "If you're in love, show Me!"

It means very little for you or for me to speak of our love for the Lord, unless we translate those words into actions. We saw that love in action played out last week in the visit of Pope Benedict to the U.S.

Certainly his words were very powerful, and as people have time to read them and digest them, we will learn more about our faith and the importance of understanding our Roman Catholic tradition and passing that faith on to others. But his actions, I think, spoke even more profoundly than his word - Meeting first with the president, then speaking with the Bishops of the United States, with representations of the various non-catholic religions, with Catholic educators and a very private meeting with victims of sexual abuse by priests, ending his time in our nation's capitol with a Mass attended by 40,000 of the faithful in Nationals Stadium.

In New York, the Holy Father addresses the United Nations, celebrated a Mass in Saint Patrick's Cathedral with religious women and men, priests and seminarians, visited a Synagogue during the observance of Passover, joined in a prayer service with representatives of many Christian denominations here in the U.S., visiting and praying at Ground Zero, participating in a prayer

rally with young people in Yonkers, and finally another Mass with 50,000 faithful at Yankee Stadium.

On all these occasions, the words of the Holy Father were strong and direct: calling for peace, prayer, truth, right relationship, respect, generosity, and hope. But speaking much louder than those profound words, were the actions of Pope Benedict: Actions that spoke of love, respect, understanding, forgiveness, hope, joy, appreciation, humility, receptivity, and a profound sense of gratitude.

In today's Gospel, Jesus reminds us that love shows itself in deeds. "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." If you are in love, show me.

Jesus also promises that He will not leave us alone. He will send the Spirit, the Advocate, to be with us always.

We here in the United States have been blessed with the visit of Pope Benedict – a very concrete reminder of God's love for us and a powerful reminder that we are never left orphans.

Whoever loves Me, will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.