

Reflection on John 6:56-69

This Sunday's Gospel is the completion of the Gospel we read last Sunday. John writes: "Many of Jesus' disciples heard Jesus speak and they said to one another: "This is too hard for us to understand." Jesus realized that his disciples were grumbling to one another and he questioned his followers. Finally Jesus asked them: "Does this bother you?" He then said to them: "What if you see the Son of Man go up to heaven where he came from? The Spirit is the One who gives life. The words I speak to you are spirit and life." Jesus then says: "You cannot come to me unless the Father wants you to come. That is why I have told you all these things."

Take a moment and put yourself in the disciples' shoes. How would you respond if Jesus were saying all of this to you? Would you be overwhelmed, excited, frightened, or elated? John tells us: "Many of Jesus' disciples turned their backs on Him and went back to their homes." However, Simon Peter approached Jesus and said: "Lord, there is no one else whom we can go to. You alone have the words of eternal life." Peter then affirmed his belief that Jesus truly was God's Holy Son!

Imagine the impact Peter's profession of faith must have had on Jesus. A few minutes before, a good number of people who had been following him turned away from Him. He was not acting as they had expected Him to act and they had walked away from Him. Yet, here was Peter boldly professing his belief in Jesus as the Christ. Peter's strong faith and deep belief in Jesus must have bolstered Jesus' spirit. Jesus was divine, yet He also was human and thus he experienced the same emotions we experience.

Peter's deep conviction that Jesus truly was the Lord was pure gift to Jesus. How deep is your conviction that Jesus is the Lord? I invite you to take a few moments and reflect on that question, then go to Jesus. If you truly do believe in Jesus, profess your conviction and your commitment to Him. If you are uncertain, take your uncertainty and doubts to Jesus. He will hold your hand and lead you closer to Him.

We all may have doubts in Jesus at times. Often these are the times we distance ourselves from Jesus. Yet these are the times when we need to approach Him and talk with Him. We may question Him or perhaps simply sit in His presence and allow Him to wrap us in love and light. We are the ones who leave Him. Jesus will never, ever leave us!