

Sixth Sunday of Easter 2020

My beloved brothers and sisters, it should be no surprise that our Christian Faith is being attacked and persecuted and tested again, not just in foreign countries like the Middle East and Africa and China; but also, in more subtle ways in Europe, the British Isles, Australia and the United States.

We are the one Religion that makes universal demands according to an unchanging and written law of God! We have staked our lives and our eternity, not upon a One World Order, Humanistic solutions to the problems of mankind, or a nanny government that dictates how we should live; but, upon the promises of God in the Old Testament and the New, and specifically in the Divine Promises revealed to us in Jesus Christ! We believe that Jesus Christ is the one fact of History that has changed all of human history! And one of the greatest moments of history, is when the emperor Constantine himself became a Christian.

He was on his way to fight against Maximian in order to earn the right to be the sole ruler of the empire of Rome, and on the way, he had a vision. He saw a huge cross hanging over the entire horizon, with Christ's initials and the words over the cross: "In hoc signum vincet". In this sign you will conquer. He promptly emblazoned the symbol upon all of his standards and all of their shields and marched to victory against a foe, twice as numerous!

In hoc signum vincet! All of us have our battles to fight in this life! We are now facing an impossible enemy, and many people are giving into fear and anger and hopelessness, (I know, because Joyce, Fr. Waggner, Fr Glenn, Fr. Heston, and I have heard a constant barrage of it!). It is because we live in a fallen world, rife with sin, suffering and death, which are the consequences of sin. The cross is our bridge into freedom, not our inhibition to freedom! When we bear the cross as true followers of Jesus, we have already cross the bridge into true freedom!

In the Gospel, Jesus reminds us of the reality and the necessity of the cross! During this season of Easter, and in fact, the whole of the Church's year, we are never permitted to forget: This gospel takes place before His death on the cross, in the upper room, as they were celebrating the first Eucharist. We see the words

of Jesus confounding the Apostles- they are shocked and confused; they have, after all, staked their lives upon Jesus and given up everything to follow Him, and now He tells them, He must go away and they cannot follow?

Jesus knows their fears, and our fears, their weaknesses and our weaknesses. Twice, He tells them: "Do not let your hearts be troubled!" He does so because He knows the churning of trouble in their hearts and in ours! He then makes a promise to them and to us: "I will never leave you orphaned! I will come to you! I will send you the paraclete!" Jesus has made a Divine Promise to us. Do we believe Him? He has proven His trustworthiness by the Resurrection! He fulfills His Divine Promise to us in the Eucharist and in the gift of the Interior Life of God in the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit of Jesus sent to draw us into Divine Union with Himself! That is our Peace in this time as well!