

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Testifying to Christ Sixth Week of Easter Monday, May 2, 2016 8:15 AM
Acts 16:11-15; **Jn 15:26—16:4a** St. Athanasius, bishop, doctor (God is walking with us, only we have to start to be more reflective.)

“And you also testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.”

This Gospel reading is on the importance of testimony, testifying, witnessing to the reality of God. Now **the Church does many things and encourages many activities**: feeding the poor, educating the young, forming disciples, building bridges, reforming society. All this is good, but it only goes so far. We promote therapy, and that’s good. We need to attack illness and its causes. We run hospitals and promote medical missions, and all this is wonderful. **But it all falls short of the actual goal that Jesus has in mind here.** Richard Rohr once said that therapy, successful therapy, is like getting a better cabin on the Titanic. It may make the journey a little better until it’s over, but it will be over because there is a tear on the hull of life, and **we are all going to sink, until we have this experience Jesus is getting at of knowing the Father, of being filled with the Spirit.**

Once we start to know the Father then our lives are totally different, then we are buoyed up, then we have new life, and this new life doesn’t ever leave us. Even when our body is spent and has to be buried, that life continues. **And that’s what we are to testify to.** How do we do that? There is no book. There is no blueprint. **Each of us has to use our own lives as the basic pattern for showing the risen Lord to others.** How does God touch you? How have you learned about the wonders of the Spirit? In what occasions has your heart been warmed?

If we become more reflective on our own lives, we will see. Just like the pair of disciples on the road to Emmaus, God is walking with us, only we have to start to be more reflective. We have to start seeing God. And on the way **we will meet many enemies, as Jesus did**: people who think they know God, but who don’t, and they may even be sincere. So there are no guarantees except one that if we walk with the Lord and if we open ourselves to the Spirit, **we will experience the richness and the depth of life that can come from no other source.** And that is our assurance. “I have told you this so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you.”