

**Death a Passing to the Father**    Seventh Week of Easter    Tuesday, May 15, 2018    8:15 AM    Acts 20:17-27;    **Jn 17:1-11a**    (St. Isidore the Farmer)    (In death itself there is nothing to fear because it's really a communion with God.)

So this is close to the very end of Jesus' farewell to his disciples, and in this particular section it is very hard to realize that he is **speaking about his impending crucifixion**. He is talking about glorifying; **he is talking about glory**. What's glorious about crucifixion? Well that's of course the very peculiar focus that we find in the Gospel of John, that **Jesus' cross is some kind of a great triumph**, that on the cross in a certain sense he has achieved a victory. He has defeated the world, the devil, the kingdom of Satan, death itself. **So this takes a bit of contemplation to actually make any sense out of it, but it has to do with Jesus' willingness to die and his readiness to die.**

Now this can be a very abstract thought until you really have to die, or until your life is really threatened; then it's no longer abstract. But as we all know abstractly sooner or later everyone dies. **Well this is about the existential moment right before: how to know the Father is to have eternal life.** And he doesn't say that only for himself; he says that for everyone. That's his role; that's his ministry, to give eternal life to everyone that the Father has given him. **And what is eternal life? To know the Father.** Well he knows the Father. He knows the Father and is friends with the Father. Everything the Father has is his; everything he has is the Father's. **They are one, and in this knowledge there is eternal life. So in his humanity he triumphs over death through this knowledge of the Father.**

Now most people have felt this is incongruous with the ordinary feelings that a person normally has, feelings for example of fear, which he also demonstrated in the Garden of Gethsemane. Well this is before the Garden of Gethsemane. But it is really **John's effort to help Jesus' disciples to face their own death at some point**, to realize that really there is nothing to fear, although it is natural to fear, especially if death comes in a violent manner. Violence is surely fearsome and, therefore, we fear it. **And yet in death itself there is nothing to fear because it's really a communion with God.** And if we already know the Father, then that should lead us over the troubles and the darkness. So this really is given to all of us to **meditate on and to think about in terms of our own eventual need to pass from this world to the Father.**