A Homily for Sunday 9th May

One of the things that has impressed people over this last year is the way in which many have been so prepared and willing to help other people. There has been so much concern, care and compassion for our neighbours shown by so many different people in communities all over this country. Not least in what me may want to call the caring professions. Many, many have found themselves hospitalised with. COVID. Many sadly have died. But many who did spend time in hospital have spoken of the exception care they received there. Care from the nursing staff and medical staff and the multitude of ancillary staff who worked there. As always there has been a cost. Healthcare workers and staff died from the virus. Not just here but throughout the world and particularly in the first few months of the pandemic. Thankfully, the virus is better understood now and along with the vaccination programme the worst lies behind us.

The laying down of life for loves sake is the theme of today’s gospel. In these final weeks of Eastertide we listen once again to the words of Jesus at the Last Supper. Jesus offers himself as the model of real love, a Iove that will continue to give even unto death itself. In the reading from Acts yes, we read of how God loves everyone. Peter has gone to the home of Cornelius who is a Roman soldier. Peter was wary about going there because he was a man outside the Jewish community. He was also a member of an occupying army. But when does go a marvellous thing happens. The Holy Spirit is poured forth upon that home. The people received the Spirit just as the disciples did when Jesus was raised from the dead. Peter makes this clear when he says, “they have received the Holy Spirit just as much as we have.”

I doubt whether we will be asked to lay down our lives for the sake of another. But none of us knows what lies ahead. As followers and disciples of Christ we are called to love and care for those outside our own circle. We are called to Love the other. Jesus tells us to reach out to those who are poor, excluded, or marginalised. Just as he did. He tells us to love our enemies just as he did. That is something that takes great courage and conviction.

Let us pray in these days before Pentecost that we may all be strengthened by a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Tim Kaye