

Seventh Sunday of Easter, Gospel, Year B

WORLDLY BEGINNINGS, HEAVENLY BELONGING

John 17:6-19

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Analysis by Glenn L. Monson

6 “I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that[a] you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost,[b] so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.[c] 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.[d] 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for

their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

DIAGNOSIS: Worldly Beginnings

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem): Our Beginnings

We find our beginnings in the world. That is where we are from. Adam and Eve are our parents, Cain is our brother, and we bear the mark of the world, which signals to all from whence we have come.

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem): Our Conflict

We remain in the world, even though Christ has gone to the Father. The world hates us because it knows we do not belong to the world. We are caught between no longer belonging to the world and yet being in the world. The Evil One lurks about, watching for an opening where we are unprotected. We find ourselves doubting that we belong to anyone, because all we can see is that Jesus has gone elsewhere.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem): Our Destiny

One of our number has already been lost, and it is small comfort that he was destined to be lost. The powers of the world close in on us. The Evil One calls to us that we belong to no one but him. We are helpless against the onslaught of the world. We despair.

PROGNOSIS: Heavenly Belonging

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution): Our Belonging

Even though we have come from the world and remain in the world, the Father has claimed us. "All mine are yours, and yours are mine," says Jesus to the Father. We have heard this word of truth and our joy is complete. We belong to God. The Cross has revealed to us and to the world God's overpowering love for the world. We no longer despair for we know we belong to the Father.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution): Our Sanctification

Sanctification is our ongoing state. The word of truth has set us apart for God's work in the world. We are no longer afraid of the Evil One, for he has been defeated on the Cross when Jesus declared, "It is finished!" Christ's joy comes to full expression in our lives as fear is replaced with faith.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution): Our Call

We are sent into the world for which Christ died. As the Father sent Christ into the world, so we are sent. As the Father guided and protected Christ, so Christ guides and protects us. We are now called to announce to others the word of truth that the Father has claimed them as well. The joy of Christ, having become our joy, is made complete as we witness others sharing in that joy and sense of belonging.