

6th Sunday of Easter, Year A – “*Christian or Monstrosity?*”
Acts 15:1-2, 22-29, Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23, John 14:23-29

AVID MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS know the rules – when going across a steep slope or a mountain crevasse – everyone ropes in and links themselves to each other leaving 35 feet of rope from one person to the next. The reason why they do so is because should things get a little crazy, should one of them slip and fall while yelling: **“FALLING!”**

All the **other team members will have time to SELF ARREST** and immediately point their feet downwards towards where the weight will soon be applied to the rope. The team – working together – absorbs the shock of the one falling and THE PERSON IS SAVED!

That's ***KIND OF WHAT OUR LORD HAS IN MIND HERE TODAY*** when he speaks about the ‘links’ that exist within the chain that's meant to keep the Children of Heaven safe as they make their way through the pitfalls of this world. There's an order to how ***GRACE and PROTECTION FROM ABOVE*** manifests itself in each of our lives. ***Just like*** there's an order as to how a TEAM OF MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS rope themselves in and link up to one another.

AND SO LET'S FOLLOW THIS because the worst thing that can happen falling off a mountain or deep into a crevasse is that one loses their **Temporal Earthly Lives** or ***if they're lucky, they'll break a few bones...*** But the worst thing that can happen if we fall off the Narrow Path that has been set by the Savior and plunge ***DEEP INTO THE CREVASSE OF MORTAL SIN*** is that we will lose our Eternal Lives. If we're lucky enough to be ignorant about our fall, **we just might end up in purgatory...**

Here's the layout of how things go for believers desiring to climb the **MOUNTAIN TOP EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION** made available in Christ.

Link #1 – “***IF you love me...***”

First thing to note is that WE HAVE A DECISION TO MAKE! It's the same decision that Peter was forced to make following our Lord's resurrection when he was asked not once, but **THREE TIMES**: “**Peter, do you love me more than these?**”

His answer to that question is meant to serve for us as an example that we are called to follow – **he said it 3x** – “**Lord, you know that I love you!!!**”

That's ***THE FIRST THING*** we need to GET STRAIGHT and that's not a question that mom and dad, our neighbors, our boss at work, or even our Prime Minister can answer for anyone. Do you **TRULY** love the Lord in the deepest sense of the word? And according to the Master, TRUE LOVE for him looks like this in the life of a real disciple: “**If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, YES, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.**” (Luke Chp.14, Verse 26)

Do we TRULY LOVE the Lord?

If not – good luck climbing the **Mountain of Immortality** as an orphan - ALL on your own – IF the answer is “**YES LORD – you know that I love you!**” – then tie yourself up to **LINK #2**...

Link #2 – “***KEEP my Commandments...***”

Jesus stresses over and over again the existence of a necessary link between **TRUE LOVE OF HIM** and **OBEDIENCE TO WHAT HE HAS COMMANDED**. These 2 Ways of Life simply cannot be separated! And yet for some reason, there's this idea out there that ‘**MY Christian Faith**’ can be severed from the demands of Gospel morality and behavior because ‘**My Marshmallow Jesus**’ is just fine with everything!

Do we want PROOF OF THIS? **Well here it is...**

Did you know that statistics Canada show Christianity to be by far, the largest religion in all of Canada. Over 67% of the population says they are Christian. And then watch this: **40% of the population checked off the box that says I'm a BAPTIZED CATHOLIC...**

And just to keep this in perspective, **ISLAM** – a religion we are all very familiar with because we hear about it all the time – Islam is the second largest religion in Canada with a **practicing population of 3.2%. 40% C, 3% M.**

How does it happen in a nation where the Prime Minister himself – **Justin Trudeau** – boasts of being a Catholic and yet demands that all MP's of his Liberal Party embrace his Commandment of PRO-ABORTION. ***The killing of children in their mothers wombs***. How does it happen than in a so-called Christian Nation doctors who refuse to do abortions or euthanize patients, THAT IS PROVIDE THE SERVICE of PHYSICIAN ASSISTED MURDER, now face the threat of Legal Prosecution. How does it happen in a so-called Christian Nation that teachers and schools are forced to teach socially acceptable **GOVERNMENT MANDATED VIEWS** on **Religion, Sexuality, and Morality** and that's just the *TIP OF THE ICEBERG*...

I'll tell you WHY and HOW that happens – it's because VERY FEW PEOPLE OUT THERE actually '**TRULY LOVE THE LORD**' – therefore, keeping **His Commandments**? Well, that's not even a **dot** on the radar of life's activities. For while statistics show that 67% of Canadians are Christian, **we've become the minority in this land**. I mean if you acknowledge that you are Catholic living out your Faith in the 21st century you are opening yourself up to accusations of **IGNORANCE, BIGOTRY, and INTOLERANCE**.

ROD DREHER – Author of New York Times Bestseller – "**The Benedict Option**", writes: "**Christians who hold to the biblical teaching about sex and marriage have the same status in culture, and increasingly in law, as racists.**"

To say that one loves the Lord and yet not keep his Commandments as a way of life – that's not Christianity – that's a **MONSTROSITY!** A monster is something that exists that has certain aspects of beauty and truth while at the same time has been **BLENDED WITH A REALITY THAT DOES NOT BELONG** to its original nature.

A Christian who **PROFESSES TO LOVE JESUS CHRIST** and then from there goes on to live their lives in **complete disobedience to His Commandments** is living a Monstrosity.

"The one who has **MY COMMANDMENTS** and keeps them is **THE ONE WHO LOVES ME**..."

St. John Chrysostom put it this way 1650 years ago: "**There would be no need for sermons, if our lives were shining; there would be no need for words, if we bore witness with our deeds. There would be no pagans, IF we were TRUE Christians.**"

As is clearly evident, not many people out there – ESPECIALLY those who checked off the 'I'm a **Baptized Canadian Catholic box**' – not many people truly '**LOVE the LORD**' for as is made EVIDENT by the way our Nation is going these days: Christians as a whole could care less about 'Christ's Commandments.' And so it necessarily follows: **few are we** who dwell in the safety and accompaniment of the PROMISED Advocate.

Because that's link #3 and link #3 doesn't happen unless there is first of all Link #1: "**IF you love me,**" followed by Link #2: "**YOU WILL keep my Commandments,**" which then results in the gift of Link #3 – "**The Father will then GIVE YOU an ADVOCATE**..."

No one in their right mind would attempt to climb **K2 all by themselves**. No one... *Why not?* Oh yeah, because something will more than likely happen along that journey and the result will be **CATASTROPHIC**. That person could get injured or even worse, they could lose their earthly life.

It's a weak analogy at best because there really is no comparison and yet, **BILLIONS OF PEOPLE** are doing it as we speak: attempting to **SUMMIT THE MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION** all by themselves. Following **No Commandments**, asking for **No Guide** or **Advocate** along the way – just freely climbing the next 24 hours a day to whatever experiential ledge **THEIR DECISIONS** take them.

This VENTURE only ends one way and it **ENDS** in the not too distant future: **CATASTROPHICALLY!**

Remember to **ROPE IN** and follow the links: **Link #1** – "**IF you love me...**" **Link #2** – "**KEEP my Commandments...**" **Link #3** "and I will ask my Father to give you another Advocate, **to be with you forever.**"

No one summits the **Mountaintop Experience of Eternal Life** in the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN alone –
NO ONE...