6th Sunday of Easter (First Holy Communion)

Acts 10: 25-26, 34-35, 44-48

Psalm 98

1John 4: 7-10

John 15: 9-17

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.”

I am filled with joy when it is made known to me that I am loved. When I am troubled, and someone comes up to me to listen to my woes and tells me that I am not alone, I know I am loved. And a joy that is deep in me blossoms. This joy is not always a happy feeling (although it may come to that). Sometimes this joy does not put a happy face on me (though it might). It is a deeper joy that settles in my soul. I am touched by the other’s care and solicitude.

Or when I am happy and someone listens to my story and rejoices with me, I know someone loves me and it doubles my joy and makes it real.

Or when I put out an effort to do a good job, whether it’s a good sermon, or waxing a car, or painting a room, or hanging up wallpaper, or any accomplishment I may have done and that person stands back and says to me, “Nice job”, I’m joy-filled and that leads me to realize that I am appreciated and loved.

At the end of this month we will remember and honor those who loved us and our country so much that they were willing to sacrifice their lives. At that moment we will show our love and pray that they will be filled with joy when they witness our appreciation for what they have done for us. And let us not forget their families and their loved ones who were affected by their sacrifice.

Joy heals us and seal us, all because we know we are loved.

We are Jesus people. We know what He has done for us – his troubles and his preaching and his job well done. His life for ours. We gather together as his family to praise Him and to love Him and to tell him we know what He has done for us and we are filled with joy. All he asks of us is to pass it on. That is his commandment to us.

We heal and seal. We love and share our joy. Not because we are something great because St. Peter says to Cornelius, “Get up. I myself am also a human being.” We heal and seal because we are filled with the Spirit of Jesus and we know deep in our hearts that we are loved by the Father. It just flows out as our gift to the other.

As an aside, there has been an uptick in patrons going to our bingo games. I asked the team leaders of this Blue Team why they think this is. The reply – “Because they like us. We smile a lot.” That is a definition of a Christian following out the commandments of Jesus.

This weekend, we celebrate First Holy Communion. Our joy is their joy. After their nervousness is over, their joy is like a beam of light. They come to know that each of them is loved not only by their family and friends, not only by their religion teachers and parish, but, most especially, they are loved each by name by Jesus who wants to share his life with them in a communion that is most holy. They are filled with joy.

Our little ones will know what we know. If we go to Holy Communion, we are healed and sealed. We know we are loved beyond all measure and our joy is complete.

Alleluia!