

## Gospel and Sermon Transcript -6th Sunday Easter - May 10, 2026

00:12

At this time of the Easter season, I think about a banner that I used to see when we

00:17

would visit in the U.S.

00:19

It was outside the United Church of Christ churches.

00:23

It said, "God still speaks."

00:27

I think that's a great thing to think about as we navigate the Easter season, and to ponder,

00:33

"Well, how is it that God speaks, and what is that experience like?"

00:40

We'll get some sense of that today, I think, with the Gospel reading, which speaks about

00:45

the Spirit of God in our midst, and that connection between love of God and service to others.

00:53

We also want to be mindful of this Mother's Day and may God enfold all who celebrate and

01:02

those who find this day either complicated or difficult.

01:08

It is very much a mixed bag, I think, for some.

01:13

So we ask God's blessing for all.

01:40

[MUSIC PLAYING]

01:51

**The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 14th chapter.**

Glory to you, O Lord. Jesus said

02:00

to the disciples, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments, and I will ask the Father

02:06

and He will give you another advocate to be with you forever." This is the spirit of truth

02:14

whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him.

02:19

You know him because he abides in you and he will be in you.

02:27

I will not leave you orphaned.

02:29

I am coming to you.

02:31

In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me because I live.

02:37

You also will live.

02:41

On that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you.

02:50

They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me.

02:54

And those who love me will be loved by my Father and I will love them and reveal myself

03:02

to them.

03:04

The Gospel of our Lord.

03:07

Won't you be seated.

### **The Sermon**

03:18

Many of you are aware that Red Dress Day was earlier this week and we wanted to mark that

03:26

and as we do, I would like to frame that to say that the church continues to grow in obedience

03:35

and wholeness and love.

03:38

And I think maybe that makes us more mindful of the size of family we truly have,

03:45

that it is beyond just a congregation or a group of people.

03:50

But it is a human family.

03:53

And I think that framing is maybe not quite enough,

03:59

but the poem that Bobbye has written and is going to read for us just now,

04:03

I think it has much to say to us, so we invite you to hear.

04:17

Have you seen my sister?

04:20

She's just five feet tall, raven hair that just touches the bottom of her ears,

04:26

a giggly laugh and dancing dark eyes.

04:29

She loves loud music and she drinks a little, smokes a lot, and often dreams out loud.

04:37

I saw her down by the mailbox hitchhiking into town.

04:42

She wore her favourite jeans and a bright green t-shirt that read, "Look out, here comes trouble."

04:50

That was last October.

04:53

The bartender said she caught a bus to didn't know where.

04:57

Have you seen my sister? Have you seen my mother? She's just about my height. Short

05:06

hair, all burned with a few sprinklings of gray. A belly laugh that hides the

05:12

sadness in her green eyes. She loves Elvis and she drinks a lot of coffee.

05:18

Smokes in secret and never dreams. I saw her out by the barn getting ready to do

05:25

the morning milking. She wore her old work clothes and a purple bandana that she once wore at a sit-in.

05:35

That was last October. Some folks say she caught the bus to don't know where.

05:42

Have you seen my mother? Have you seen my daughter? She's taller than me.

05:50

She wears her hair in tiny braids that swing across her shoulders, an impatient laugh and

05:57

a warm hug.

05:59

She loves jazz and playing the flute, and she drinks wine coolers, has never smoked,

06:06

and has great plans and dreams of how her life is going to be.

06:13

I helped as she packed her bag and waved as she backed her second-hand car out of the

06:19

driveway on her way to a new job in a different town.

06:25

Her car was silver.

06:27

Her coat was navy blue.

06:30

She had a dreamcatcher hanging from her rearview mirror.

06:35

That was last October.

06:37

Her landlord said she never arrived.

06:42

She had changed her mind like young girls do and went to Don't Know Where.

06:48

Have you seen my daughter?

06:51

Have you seen my mother?

06:53

Have you seen my sisters for the missing and the murdered?

07:01

[ Pause ]

07:25

And that might well be the heart of it.

07:31

It's not them, it's us.

07:35

So I think the poem is a very eloquent reminder.

07:40

There is a quote I'd like to share with you,

07:43

and I'm going to quiz you a little bit because you may know where it comes from.

07:49

It goes like this.

07:50

When the love of power is replaced by the power of love, then we will know peace.

08:02

When the love of power is replaced by the power of love, we will know peace.

08:16

Anybody want to hazard a guess who said that?

08:25

Well, it's most recently attributed to Jimi Hendrix.

08:30

Oh, come on, who? Did anybody go to Woodstock here? Not the one in Ontario?

08:34

Oh, you're familiar with it though. Okay.

08:39

Well, it's also thought that this quote was said in similar form by the parliamentarian Lord Gladstone in the UK.

08:48

It's also attributed to mystics in India.

08:54

And the words pair beautifully with the Gospel reading,

08:58

where Jesus speaks about love as being twinned to obedience and to commandment keeping.

09:12

The reading is a little tricky.

09:17

The words really need to be "since therefore" instead of "if then."

09:24

They tend to be more that way if you were to read the texts in Greek.

09:30

Somewhere along the way, I'm not sure what happened, but it became more "if then."

09:37

to take that a little too literally. So let's speak about a condition that

09:43

already is and what that condition produces and that is people of love in

09:50

obedience to a loving God. And if we love we keep the commandments and the

09:58

scripture has this marvelous way of making the whole thing circular when

10:03

Jesus articulates the greatest commandment. Love. Love God. Love your

10:11

neighbour.

10:18

This advocate that Jesus speaks of, this Spirit of God, this Spirit of the risen

10:24

Christ, is what animates us. It calls us to love and commandment keeping, which are

10:32

really one and the same. It leads us to dream of a world where yes one day the

10:42

love of power will be replaced with the power of love. And what might the spirit

10:49

be saying even to the church now?

10:58

In a few minutes, we will be saying together the Nicene Creed.

11:03

And that third section,

11:06

called an article,

11:08

"Oh, what happened again?" I said this earlier today. People start getting the catechism willies, you know,

11:13

"Well, no, not this again." Is he gonna ask his questions and stuff? I mean,

11:18

but I would like to say

11:21

that we tend to think about that third segment as a laundry list of stuff we subscribe to or believe in

11:28

And when in reality, we can be invited to think about that third segment about the Holy

11:34

Spirit as being what the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the risen Christ, the Spirit of

11:40

the One who was, is, and is to come.

11:43

That Spirit is doing.

11:46

And so we say things like we believe in a holy church, not dashboard squeaky clean saints.

11:58

But holy is in wholeness.

12:03

And sometimes wholeness requires a great deal of unlearning.

12:07

And I think the church is experiencing that even now.

12:11

We are having to unlearn the custom patterns and be church in conditions that we know very little about.

12:20

Not too many years ago at a national assembly, the church in true baptismal fashion renounced

12:30

things that we used to hold as doctrine.

12:32

One of those being the doctrine of discovery, which held that.

12:38

It was only when the colonists showed up that God showed up in Canada.

12:45

I was at that assembly.

12:48

And the verb and the vocality of people saying,

12:52

we renounce this and we want to live different,

12:54

was a profound and holy unlearning.

13:00

I don't suggest that that moment means

13:05

that we have no work left.

13:07

We have lots of work left.

13:09

And when our poets remind us that the murdered and the missing,

13:14

There's somebody's family and there are family too.

13:20

We also say that we are a Catholic Church.

13:25

I'm kind of smirking because some of you

13:27

have been in on this, right?

13:30

This dust up about, we can't say that.

13:33

We're loathsome and for heaven's sake.

13:36

And we tried to do the whole big C, little C thing.

13:39

And I don't-- did that help anybody really?

13:42

I don't know. It was the best some of us had to work with at the time. But the

13:50

reality comes to us in that Catholic really means universal, reminding us of

13:57

our identity as being connected to people of all times, of all places. The

14:04

spirit gathering us and empowering us to love and to serve.

14:14

Related, we say we are apostolic, which means we are sent with a purpose. And it

14:22

may be we don't have to walk very far at all to be sent. We may find our purpose

14:28

Because at the end of our driveway, at our supermarkets, in our schools, or even in our

14:34

families, to be that bearer of God's good news, that icon, if you will, of the love

14:44

of God, and it takes its form in obedience to the commandments to love.

14:55

May our prayer be for the church and for the world that we will get to see some glimpses

15:05

in our lifetime of holy moments when that love of power

15:16

is replaced by the power of love.

15:25

Amen.