We come together this week to celebrate the 6th Sunday of Easter and hear Jesus tell us that we will not be left as orphans and that we will receive the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot accept.

Today many live without belief in the existence of truth. Some use the word without understanding its authentic meaning, as if it can donate only a personal opinion, a thing that is “true” only for the individual who holds that idea. This widespread belief, the system of thought which refuses to confirm that any one idea or law can apply to all persons as “true”, has crept in with increasing power like an infection into the body of the Church. For the Catholic Christian, however, there can never be any confusion as to the existence of truth. There can be no Catholic faith without truth, for Christ founded the Church for the purpose of teaching the truth, endowing her with gift of the Holy Spirit by which the truth is taught infallibly in matters of faith and moral in every age.

The Church teaches the truth so that we may abide in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit who proclaims the truth in the Church. The Holy Spirit gives particular assistance to the Holy Father who leads the Church on earth into all truth. Our pope, the Vicar of Christ on earth, the successor of Peter, then ministers to the Church and the world as a servant of the truth. This teaching is then funneled through the Bishops to the priests, deacons and all the members of God’s Holy Church that all may be freed to live eternal life. The matters of faith and morals that we all receive are not the opinion of any one minister in the Church; rather, it is the Spirit of Truth who speaks through them.

What I am trying to say is that our readings today show us that what Jesus did in the flesh he now does through the Church. From Stephen’s being dragged outside the city to be killed, to Peter and John’s curing the crippled man, to Philip’s preaching and healing in Samaria, we see how the Church continues the life and works of Jesus. And we see that Pope Francis has been very vocal on the role of the Church in the modern world. It is the role of engagement and involvement. It is a role of bringing the Good News and the gifts we have received to the world for its benefit and advancement.

Many people have a hard time remembering or accepting the fact that God is with us each and every moment of our lives; the good times and the not so good times. We tend to think that our hard times are more difficult than most and that God has abandoned us. We sometimes feel that we are alone and others will not understand our grief. And I can tell you that Halina and I, too, have had some of these moments in our lives, feeling that our problems are worse than most. But I can also tell you that we, on many occasions have found that as we talk to others, they are having more problems than we are.

Two weeks ago I was approached by a person of our parish telling me that there was a woman with her two children begging for financial help at the entrance of our parish. My first reaction was to agree with that person that this was not acceptable. Later I heard more comments about this situation and several solutions to the “problem.”
In our discussion at our monthly parish staff meeting many people had ideas and remedies for the “problem.” But I have to tell you about Fr. Charlie’s comment. He said that whenever we are confronted with someone asking for help in any way we should immediately ask ourselves the question, “Would I be willing to change lives with this person!”

Today we are told that;
Obedient faithfulness to the mission and teaching of Jesus leads us to be one with Jesus.
Faithfulness to the teaching and mission of Jesus makes Jesus present in our life.
Care for others and dedication to their needs and well-being on our part makes Jesus present to others in their lives.

Our activity and approach to Christian living and that of the early Church and that of Jesus are all one and the same – while still allowing for cultural and personal differences.

Jesus promised the apostles the Advocate. This is the Holy Spirit we received at our Baptism and Confirmation. In two weeks we complete the Easter Season with the Celebration of Pentecost. This Gospel serves as a good reminder to prepare for Pentecost by claiming that gift and taking time to realize all that the Holy Spirit has to offer us and not hesitating to call upon the gifts of the Spirit to strengthen and guide us.

And, finally, Jesus speaks of unity. There is the unity of the Trinity that he speaks about as he teaches us about the Advocate, and revealing to us that he and the Father are one. Jesus invites us to experience the love of our Father, the grace that flows from him and the unity of the Holy Spirit that binds them into one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

There is also the unity of the believers to Christ. Jesus taught that, “Whatever you do to the least of my brothers (and sisters) you do to me.” St. Paul experienced this on the road to Damascus when he heard the voice say, “Why do you persecute me.” The unity of the body of Christ, of us with Christ, should not be underrated. It is a beautiful part of God’s love that binds us to him.

Just as the members of the early Church believed that Jesus was very much among them and working through them in the power of the Holy Spirit, so we come to this Eucharistic celebration, convinced in faith of the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. What we offer and receive here is union in the Spirit with the same Lord who walked this earth, died and rose from the dead.

May the living of our Catholic faith make God’s Spirit of Truth evident to all who come in contact with us.