**Be a Light Bringer**

**Jesus stood in a crowd of people and said, “I am the bread of Life.” He also went on to say, “Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” He also told the people gathered around him he had come down from heaven. The crowd began to complain. They were saying things like, “Isn’t this the son of Mary and Joseph? We know them.”**

**The crowd just didn’t understand how Jesus could say, “I have come down from heaven.” This group was made up of good Jewish people. How could they even contemplate what Jesus was saying to them. The only way I believe we can understand the people who stood around Jesus on this long-ago day, is to think how we would react if a person we had known as part of a local family started saying things sounding strange and impossible. Jesus’ life was never an easy one. He brought a whole new way of thinking, what would become a whole new religion, into this world. Maybe if we had been in that crowd we would have complained too. Yet those of us gathered here today believe Jesus is the Son of God. But the person who wrote this Gospel didn’t really understand Jesus’ main message was summed up in just two commandments, love God and love our neighbors as ourselves. Nor did the writer understand the Jewish people. Because in his writing of the Gospel of John, he did a grave injustice toward the Jewish people.**

**The person who wrote this Gospel and called himself John was not the disciple John. Too many years had gone by before this gospel was written. At least seventy to ninety years had elapsed when this Gospel was written. This is a long time, and no doubt the disciple John was not alive at this point in time. Plus, we know how much can change in the span of seventy to ninety years. We don’t know who wrote the Gospel of John. But at the time the Gospel was written it wasn’t unusual for a writer to use a better-known person’s name rather than his own. But the person who wrote the Gospel of John often speaks of Jews in a derogatory way. There are as many as seventy-one references to Jews in the Gospel of John. The author of this work could not have known Jesus in his human form. Jesus was a Jew, and yet that fact seems to be forgotten by the writer. When Jesus walked the earth, most of the people he knew were Jewish. When the author of the Gospel of John was alive, his world had two distinctly different groups of people, Jews and Christians. Of course, there were other groups too. Yet it’s important to remember Jews and Christians were completely separated groups by this time and for whatever reason, the author of this Gospel didn’t like Jews.**

**By the time this Gospel was written, Jews and Christians were two completely separated groups. The author of this Gospel wrote as if he only lived in a black or white world. The Jews world was all black and the Christiana world was all white. For him all Christians were the good people and all Jews were the bad people. It’s dangerous for each of us when people only see in black or white. The truth is we are all capable of good and bad. It just depends on where we want to be during our lifetime, doing good for each other or supporting and working for those forces who serve the dark.**

**Here are just a few phrases coming out of the Gospel of John aimed at denigrating the Jewish people. The Gospel tells its readers, the Pharisees are blind, false teachers. The Pharisees oppose Jesus, and also the chief priests oppose Jesus. We have no way of knowing what was on the mind of the person who wrote the Gospel of John. Yet, in these few examples we can see how this Gospel could be used against Jewish people. In fact, by the Middle Ages the epithet “Christ-killers” became the verbal words justifying the persecution and murder of Jews.**

**Not just in the Gospel of John, but every Gospel mentions Jews were the killers of Jesus. We all know how all these accusations from the Gospels led us into the horror of the Second World War. Even today there are people in our country who believe the Jews killed Jesus. In fact, in a recent poll twenty six percent of the people polled believe Jews were the people who killed Jesus. The Romans had Jesus put to death and even the Pope told his flock not to place blame on the Jews for Jesus ‘death. In our current times, almost a third of the people polled believe the Jews killed Jesus. Such a belief can lead to terrible consequences and even death for the Jews who walk this earth with us.**

**But as Marin Luther King Jr. said, there is always a split between good and evil. Yet God and the light of the world will always win. It’s interesting one third of all people in our country believe Jews killed Jesus. Here are a few examples of more one thrid splits. In the Revolutionary war one third of the people were on the side of the Red Coats and England. In the Civil War one third if the people of our country supported the Rebels. In the Second World war only one thrid of the Germans were in favor of Hitler. In our time right now one third of our country believe nothing serious happened on January 6. The same one third also believe our national election was rigged and stolen.**

**Right and the light will always win, yet sometimes it may feel right will never prevail. The dark always wants to divide and conquer, while the Light seeks to bring people together to support all good causes. We live in a time when it seems as if Light can never prevail. Yet is always has and it always will. Maybe slowly, maybe not over night, but the light will prevail.**

**Light bringers always circle close to those who serve light and offer this Light to all people everywhere. Jesus is the Son of God whom we circle close to, as we learn to expand our own little lights in the world. How can we do that right now, in our little town? I joined a zoom meeting to hear the Chicago Diocese new assistant bishop speaking to us. Her name is Chiton Knudson, and like so many people in this diocese who are leaders, she will be a great asset for the diocese and each of us wanting to bring more light into the world.**

**How can any of us know which side right and which side is wrong in our present society? Always listen for the truth. Which is not too difficult to discern because of all the large whoppers coming out on our televisions and radios day after day. Stay with the truth and as an old saying goes, “The truth will set you free.” Stay close to Jesus by saying your prayers and walking close in the circle of the light of the world. Amen**