

May 23 2020-Saturday, Sixth Week of Easter

A legend or a fable is a story that doesn't pretend to be historical, but simply teaches a lesson. The events surrounding the resurrection of Christ gave rise to many legends.

Legend of the elder tree

From which tree did Judas hang himself?

No one knows for sure but tradition suggests that it was the elder tree. It is also claimed that the wood for Jesus' cross came from an elder tree, although others dismiss this theory saying that Jesus would not have struggled with the lightweight wood of the elder tree along the Way of the Cross.

The elder tree was considered to be a protective tree, often planted by a back door to keep evil spirits away. Its fragrant white blossoms also kept away flies. Elderberry wine has medicinal purposes for combatting colds and flu.

The small tree features soft fungal growths which look like mushrooms and are dubbed "Judas' ears."

Jesus said: "Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him." (John 14:21)

There are seven weeks to this Easter season, and as the weeks progress, the passages in the Gospel invite me to focus less and less on the tangible, bodily presence of the risen Lord, and more and more on an even deeper presence of the Lord that cannot be seen.

The tangible, bodily presence of Christ that could be seen and touched was a miraculous kind of presence, but one that was temporary (as all miracles are).

A deeper, more enduring presence of the risen Christ comes to me in the giving of the Spirit as he promised.

I need to be attentive to this gift of the Spirit that has been given me.

When I believe what Jesus said about his presence in my life through the gift of the Spirit, it has a profound effect on my life.

Then I don't need alcohol to give me courage.

Then I don't need everyone's approval to give me confidence.

Then I don't need to win all the time to feel like I am worthwhile.

Then I don't have to seem important to others to feel important.

Jesus, risen...giving me his Spirit.

Imagine.

Spend some quiet time with the Lord