

## Jesus the Advocate (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter, Year B)

### 1 John 2:1-5—Jesus the Paraclete

<sup>1</sup> My little children, I am writing this to you *so that you may not sin*; but if any one does sin, we *have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*; <sup>2</sup> *and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.* <sup>3</sup> And by this we may be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments. <sup>4</sup> *He who says “I know him” but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him;* <sup>5</sup> but whoever keeps his word, in him truly love for God is perfected. (1 John 2:1-5)

1. Moral Exhortation: “I am writing this... so that you may not sin” (2:1)
2. Paraclete: “Jesus Christ” is an “advocate” (*paraklētos*) with the Father (2:1)
3. Advocate: “called” (Greek *-klētos*) to one’s “side” (Greek *para-*) (2:1)
4. Two Paracletes:
  - a. Jesus (1 John 2:1)
  - b. The Holy Spirit (John 14:26)
5. Expiation = “expiation” (*hilasmos*) for our sins (2:2; cf. 4:10; only occurs here in NT)

<sup>8</sup> But if the man has no kinsman to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution for wrong shall go to the Lord for the priest, in addition to *the ram of atonement* (Greek *hilasmos*) with which atonement is made for him. (Num 5:8 LXX)

6. Knowing Christ = keeping his “commandments” (2:4)
7. Abiding in Christ = “walking” as he “walked” (cf. Psalm 15)

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, who shall sojourn in thy tent?  
Who shall dwell on thy holy hill?  
<sup>2</sup> *He who walks blamelessly, and does what is right,*  
and speaks truth from his heart (Psalm 15:1-2)

### The Living Tradition

Augustine of Hippo: But perhaps sin creeps up on us from human life. What will happen then? What? Is there now to be hopelessness? Listen: “And if anyone sins,” he says, “we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins” (2:1-2). He is our advocate, therefore. *Be careful not to sin. If sin creeps up on you due to life’s frailty, be vigilant at once, let it displease you at once, condemn it at once, and, when you have condemned it, you will come securely to the judge. There you have your advocate.* Don’t fear that you may lose your case once you have confessed. For, if there are times in this life when a person entrusts himself to a clever tongue and doesn’t perish, will you entrust yourself to the Word and perish? *Cry out: “We have an*

*advocate with the Father!*” (Augustine, *Homilies on 1 John*, 1.7; trans. Boniface Ramsey)

**Questions for Discussion and Reflection (3rd Sunday of Easter, Year B)**

1. If the Holy Spirit is the “Advocate,” then how can the apostle John call Jesus the “Advocate” (1 John 2:1)?

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**For Further Reading**

1. Saint Augustine. *Homilies on the First Epistle of John*. Translated by Boniface Ramsey, O.P. Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2008.