

Now has the Son of Man been glorified.

The discourses of Jesus given during the Last Supper are both majestic and captivating. They possess qualities which are special and precious to a degree that we must treasure them with great devotion. They speak to us though with a sense of mystery as they seem to be perfectly appropriate to the atmosphere of the Upper Room where the Last Supper was celebrated, but also to the atmosphere of the Locked Room, where the disciples were on the day of Easter. I don't think that this is just a coincidence. If we think about these two situations, the one in the Upper Room and the other in the Locked Room, we find that the words of Jesus are capable of opening up for us new ways of looking at and accessing our faith, showing us insights and depths to our understanding of it that perhaps we hadn't realised were there.

One of the defining factors for understanding this is to come to the realisation that much of what Jesus says in the Upper Room could just as easily have been said in that Locked Room. Yet what separates the two is sometimes what separates us from God and from Jesus. The atmosphere of love in the first is contrasted sharply with the atmosphere of fear in the other, and this contrast becomes a real barrier that keeps the one out of reach of the other. We feel comfortable and at ease in an atmosphere of love whereas an atmosphere of fear engenders mistrust and doubt. The words of Jesus work in us so as to break down that barrier and I think they achieve it with a deep appreciation of how the resurrection makes itself present to each of us.

If you were to transfer all of the Last Supper discourse in to the atmosphere of the Locked Room and have them spoken by the Risen Christ to the disciples who had gathered there in fear, then their effect would be profound. Just remind yourself of some of the phrases and begin to explore the ramifications of these words as coming from the lips of the Risen Lord. Just take the famous phrase from today's gospel : *I give you a new commandment: love one another, just as I have loved you, you must love one another*. How precious do these words sound when we are ourselves troubled by fear and by doubt and uncertain of our way? Now reverse the process and put the Risen Lord into the Upper Room and have him express that new commandment by washing our feet. How much deeper is the significance and the symbolism of the Eucharist made present for us? How much more meaningful and real is Jesus for us in the things we do and in the love we share by virtue of these words? If he is present to us in this way, then must it not be the case that he is present in our love and kindness, in our generosity and mercy? Is it fanciful to imagine it thus? I don't think so and I think the gospel in its own way offers such an interpretation. Jesus says: *now has the Son of Man been glorified* and we know that for the evangelist the glorification of Jesus encompasses his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.

The resurrection touches all aspects of our lives and the words of Jesus spoken in an atmosphere of love on the one hand and in an atmosphere of fear on the other show that no situation is beyond his reach. All we are called upon to do is to open up the Locked Room we sometimes inhabit and allow the atmosphere of love from the Upper Room to enter in.