

**J.D. Ousley**  
**Homily—26May19**  
**John 14.23-29**  
**“Heart Trouble”**

*In the Name of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Amen.*

We occasionally hear someone say, “That broke my heart.”

And we hear that expression not only in a romantic context. People can be heartbroken when a business deal falls through, or even when a favorite sports team loses a crucial game.

It’s a vivid expression! Your heart of course is everything to you. Your physical health depends on it. So, too, your emotional well-being centers on how you feel “inside” your core self.

Jesus then was speaking about our most common and essential human needs when he said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”

These are not just comforting words. Jesus isn’t just promising divine assistance with our problems. Sure, God is ready to help us—that’s one of the things that God does!

But Jesus also wants us to know that we have a part to play in our well-being. Notice that Jesus says, “Do not *let* your hearts be troubled...” He is assuming that we have some control over our feelings. We can let our hearts be troubled—or not.

That doesn’t mean that we can always avoid heartbreak. We don’t have total control; into every life, some rain must fall.

But Christ does give us the assurance that because the Holy Spirit of God is always with us, some comfort is always within reach.

Notice too that a modern term for the trouble that we might feel in our hearts is *stress*. In this case, it is worth remembering that emotional stress can have physical consequences—and ironically one of those consequences is medical damage to our hearts!

Here again, though, Christ’s words are useful and important. “*Let* not your hearts be troubled”—don’t let your hearts be stressed. Don’t let the many unpredictable tensions of life stress you out.

There is no simple cure for heartbreak. Happily, though, as the old spiritual says, “There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole.”

There is a balm in Gilead. There is a healing medicine that restores the worst inner pains. We can turn to Christ when we feel heavy-laden, and he will give us rest.

*Amen.*