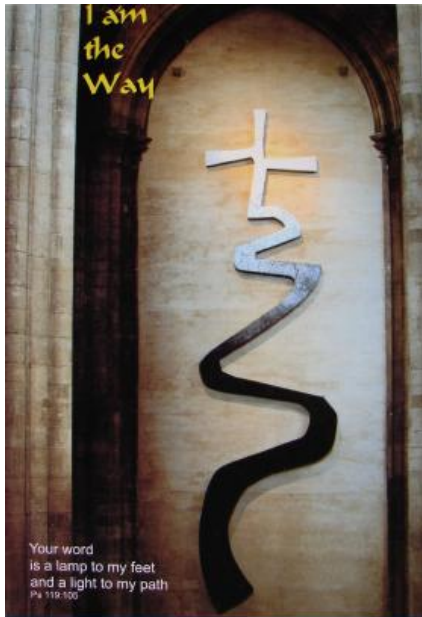


LOOKING AT LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPEL

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FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

3rd May 2026

John 14:1 Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ² In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

John 14:8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this

time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

This familiar passage (often read at funerals) opens the final speech of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, running from chapter 14 through 17. As always in the Fourth Gospel, we are dealing with meditations from the end of the first century, not the actual words of the historical Jesus. This doesn't make them less true or reliable.

KIND OF WRITING

As noted above, John 14-17 belongs to a recognisable literary genre, that of Farewell Discourse. A Farewell Discourse deals with departure, final arrangements, the importance of past relationships, the future shape of relationships, the duties of those left behind, future problems and the resources for living, unity of the group. In particular, the continued gift of life (in Christ) is guaranteed by the future gift of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete or Advocate.

Thought for the day

Jesus is already now today our way, our truth and our life. As the Gospel says, to have eternal life is to believe in him whom God has sent (Jn 5:24; 17:3). This is a reality for us now and it guides our life, in matters great and small. At the core of this reality is trust, that is, the capacity to entrust all that we have and are to the living God and to his Son, raised from the dead. It is not an accident that the verb "to believe" occurs no fewer than ninety-eight times in the Fourth Gospel.

KIERAN O'MAHONY OSA - www.tarsus.ie

Reflection

In a time of change and uncertainty many people long for old securities and the sense of stability that goes with them. Yet that is not our calling. We allow ourselves to be made into a community where God dwells and like the early Church in Jerusalem the universal Church today must trust that the Holy Spirit will guide it to where God wants it to be. If our hearts are troubled, let us turn to Christ for in him alone is our peace.

SEAN GOAN - *Let the Reader Understand*

The question of Thomas brings them down to reality. *“Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”* Jesus responds without hesitation: *“I am the way that leads to the Father.”* He is the way that leads from now on to the the experience of God as Father. What matters most is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus until we reach the Father. Philip sensed that Jesus was not talking about just any religious experience. It is not enough to believe in an all powerful God to experience his goodness, or one who is too great and distant to experience his mercy. What Jesus wants to instil in them is something different. So Philip says *“Show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”*

The response of Jesus is unexpected and magnificent: *“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”* The life of Jesus: his goodness, his freedom to do good, his forgiveness, his love for the ‘least’ - these all make the Father visible and credible. His life reveals to us that in the depths of reality there resides the ultimate mystery of goodness and love. He calls it “Father”.

Christians are sustained by these two saying of Jesus: *“Do not be afraid because I go to prepare a place for you in the house of my Father”* and *“Whoever sees me sees the Father.”* Whenever we dare to live up to something of the goodness, the freedom and the compassion that Jesus brought into the world, we will make more credible a God who is Father and the ultimate source of our hope.

JOSÉ A PAGOLA - *Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus*

GENERAL COMMENT

It is useful to remember that the teaching was given on a specific occasion: Jesus was facing a great crisis in his own life and in the life of the little community he had founded. In your meditation, remember a similar moment in your own life, or in the life of your community, or in the history of a country or even a civilization. Who was Jesus in that situation, speaking as Jesus did in these passages? Looking back on those experiences, what words of Jesus can you see were fulfilled?

Thomas is struggling with the desire, which is in all of us, to know exactly the destination before we set out. Jesus invites him to make an act of faith and to take one step at a time.

MICHEL DE VERTEUIL - *Lectio Divina on the Sunday Gospels*

POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me.” Trust in another person can help us in difficult times. Remember and give thanks for the people you were able to trust in difficult moments. Remember also when your faith in God helped you through anxious moments.
2. Thomas struggled with the desire, which is in all of us, to know exactly the destination before we set out. Jesus invites us to make an act of faith and to take one step at a time. Can you recall times when it helped you to take that trusting attitude to life?
3. Jesus proposed himself to Thomas as the way, the truth and the life. In what ways has Jesus been the way, the truth and the life for you on your faith journey?
4. Philip wanted Jesus to give him a glimpse of God and got the surprising answer “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father”. Jesus put a human face on the love of God. He gives us a glimpse of the divine. We are Jesus in the world today, called to follow Jesus and to put a human face on the love of God for those who meet us. Who are the people whose love has helped you to believe in the love of God? To whom have you given an occasional glimpse of the divine?

JOHN BYRNE OSA - *Intercom*

Philip and Thomas are desperate to understand more fully where Jesus is going. They want to know how they can get there, what God is like, and how they can see God. Big questions that show their deep desire to know God more intimately. Jesus urges the disciples to embrace the journey, the Way that lies ahead of them, rather than focusing on the destination. For it is only in the light of the events that will happen to them (and us) that any period of time can be fully understood. In the past the phrase ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life’ may have been used to exclude those who did not consider themselves followers of Christ, but this is a distortion of a beautiful text. Jesus is the Way because the **models** the Way for us and we are invited to follow. Jesus, through his life, shows us what the presence of God in this world looks like and, at the same time, what it means to be fully human.

Jesus wants us to experience deep peace, in the here and now. Talk to him about your concerns. Hear Jesus speaking these words to you: ‘Do not let your hearts be troubled’.

Lectio Divina can help us to experience the living Christ in our daily lives and help us to follow the Way, the Truth and the Life he set out before us. Allow the words of this gospel passage to soak deeply into your heart. Pick a phrase that stands out for you and use it as a mantra this week.

TRÍONA DOHERTY & JANE MELLETT - *Go Deeper*