

Scripture Study

Fifth Sunday of Easter – Cycle A



Opening prayer

Acts 6:1-7

(Ps 33:1-2,4-5,18-19)

1 Peter 2:4-9

John 14:1-12

Overview of the Gospel:

- This Sunday's reading takes place at the Last Supper (see John, chapters 13—17). Judas has just left the room; Jesus has predicted his upcoming death, and has revealed that Peter, the leader of their group, will deny him in his hour of need (John 13ff). The hearts of the apostles must have indeed been troubled.
- Even though he himself is troubled (John 13:21) he speaks words of comfort to his friends. He tells them that, even though he will be leaving, it will be for their greater good (verses 1-4, 7, 12). The disciples, in their grief not being able to grasp his words, question him on how this can be. Jesus reveals that he himself is “the Way, the Truth and the Life.”
- Jesus is the *Way* (John 6:68, 10:9; Romans 5:1-2; Ephesians 2:17-22; Hebrews 10:19-22; CCC 459-460), the *Truth* (John 1:14, 17; CCC 2466), and the *Life* (John 1:1-5, 5:26, 29, 6:51, 68).
- In the Book of Acts, which relates the early growth of the Church, the *Christian life* is also often called “the Way” (Acts 9:3, 19:9, 23, 22:4, 24:14, 22).

Questions:

- In the 1st Reading, we see that the Church had to adapt to changing circumstances without compromising the essence of the Faith. What does it tell us about Jesus' promise to be with the Church always?
- In the 2nd Reading, what distinction does St. Peter draw between those who have faith, and those who do not (verse 7)?
- In the Gospel Reading, what comfort does Jesus offer his disciples?
- Look at John 13:36; 14:6, 8, 22. What problems are the disciples struggling with?
- How does John 1:18 relate to what Jesus says in 14:9? With what tone of voice do you imagine Jesus speaking in verses 9-14? What evidence does Jesus give for his claims?
- Do you think the promises Jesus makes in verses 12-14 are “blank check” promises about prayer? In verse 12, does he mean the Church will do works greater in *power*? In *scope*? How could this be?
- If Jesus is the Way, do you feel you're on a bumpy dead-end street, or a four-lane highway? Why?
- In light of verse 6, how would you respond to someone who says “there are many ways to God”?

Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 74, 151, 459, 470, 516, 661, 1698, 2466

Closing Prayer

Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings!

*Humanity is loved by God! ...Each Christian's words and life must make this proclamation resound:
God loves you, Christ came for you, Christ is for you “the Way, the Truth and the Life!”*

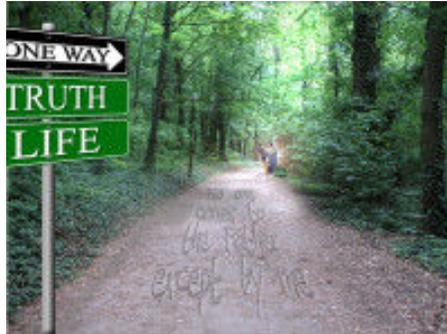
-Pope John Paul II

"Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied."

Scripture: *John 14:1-12*

Meditation: As much as we try to avoid it, we all inevitably encounter troubles and trials, and sometimes more than we think we can handle! Jesus knew that his disciples would have to face adversity and trials after he left them to return to his Father. Jesus assured them that his departure is for their good, in order to secure a place for them in God's house – a place of refuge, peace, and everlasting happiness. If the Father's home in heaven is our destination, how can we find our way without a map or a guide? The scriptures speak of the way that leads to peace and union with God. *And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not pass over it, and fools shall not err therein* (Isaiah). *Teach me your way, O Lord; and lead me on a level path* (Psalm 27:11). *You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the way which the Lord your God has commanded you* (Deuteronomy 5:32-33).

Jesus proclaims: *I am the Way*. The Lord Jesus does not simply give counsel and direction. He personally is the way, and we cannot miss it if we follow him. He leads and guides us personally every day. The Lord Jesus also is the *Truth*. Many can say, "I have taught you the truth." Only Jesus can say, *I am the*



Truth. Moral truth cannot be conveyed in words alone; it must be conveyed in example. Jesus embodies the truth in his person. Jesus also is the *Life*. He not only *shows us the path of life* (Psalm 16:11); he gives the kind of life which only God can give – eternal and abundant life. Is there any fear or trouble which keeps you from the perfect peace and happiness of a life surrendered to Jesus Christ?

Jesus shows us the true aim and purpose for our life – what we were created for – and what we should strive for with all of our strength and being. What is that purpose? To *know* God. What is the best thing in life, bringing more joy, contentment, life and happiness, than anything else? Knowledge of God. *Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me"* (Jeremiah 9:23-24). One of the greatest truths of the Christian faith is that we can know the living God. Our

knowledge of God is not simply limited to knowing something about God, but we can know God personally. The essence of Christianity, and what makes it distinct from Judaism and other religions, is the knowledge of God as our *Father*. Jesus makes it possible for each of us to personally know God as *our* Father. To see Jesus is to see what God is like. In Jesus we see the perfect love of God – a God who cares intensely and who yearns over men and women, loving them to the point of laying down his life for them upon the Cross. Jesus is the revelation of God – a God who loves us completely, unconditionally, and perfectly for our good. Jesus also promises that God the Father will hear our prayers when we pray in his name. That is why Jesus taught his followers to pray with confidence, *Our Father who art in heaven ..give us this day our daily bread* (Matthew 6:9). Do you pray to your Father in heaven with joy and confidence in his love and care for you?

"Lord Jesus, you fill us with the joy of your saving presence and you give us the hope of everlasting life with the Father in Heaven. Show me the Father that I may know and glorify him more fully."

© 2011 Don Schwager
www.rc.net/wcc/reading