

Reflections on the Gospel



THE SAVING WORD

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER / A

10 MAY 2020

I shall return to take you with me;
so that where I am
you may be too.
You know the way to the place where I am
going.'

Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you
are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus
said:

'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.

No one can come to the Father except
through me.

If you know me, you know my Father too.

From this moment you know him and have
seen him.'

Philip said, 'Lord, let us see the Father and
then we shall be satisfied.' 'Have I been with
you all this time, Philip,' said Jesus to him 'and
you still do not know me?

'To have seen me is to have seen the Father,
so how can you say, "Let us see the Father"?
Do you not believe

that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?
The words I say to you I do not speak as from
myself:

it is the Father, living in me, who is doing
this work.

You must believe me when I say
that I am in the Father and the Father is in me;
believe it on the evidence of this work, if for
no other reason.

'I tell you most solemnly,
whoever believes in me
will perform the same works as I do myself,
he will perform even greater works,
because I am going to the Father.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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'IT IS BETTER THAN I GO AWAY ...'

Today's Gospel comes from the long
instruction that Jesus, according to the
Fourth Gospel, gives to his disciples at the
Last Supper. He reflects upon his return to
the Father and what his absence will mean for
the disciples.

Jesus' 'departure' seems to operate on two
levels. The setting of the supper on the night
before he dies makes it natural to understand
'going away' as a reference to his imminent
departure in death; his 'coming back', then,
would refer to his appearance on the third day
as risen Lord.

At another level, however, Jesus addresses a
more permanent 'going away' when, following
his appearances to the disciples as risen Lord,
he finally ascends to the Father (see John
20:17). From this perspective, his 'coming
back' would refer to his return at the end of
time.

At this level the instruction Jesus gives does
not bear upon the short space between Good
Friday and Easter, but upon the indefinite
'time of the Church' that will follow.

During this time—which remains our time—the
disciples will not enjoy his physical presence.
But Jesus insists that it will be a better time
in fact. His death on the cross will defeat the
grip of sin and death upon the human race,
and open up for us the gift of eternal life.

Jesus is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life'
in the sense that his death supremely reveals
the 'truth' about God (that God is love) and
opens up the 'way' to human sharing in God's
(eternal) 'life'.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

FIRST READING

Acts 6:1-7

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

*They elected seven men filled with the Spirit and
wisdom.*

About this time, when the number of disciples
was increasing, the Hellenists made a complaint
against the Hebrews: in the daily distribution
their own widows were being overlooked. So
the Twelve called a full meeting of the disciples
and addressed them, 'It would not be right for
us to neglect the word of God so as to give out
food; you, brothers, must select from among
yourselves seven men of good reputation,
filled with the Spirit and with wisdom; we will
hand over this duty to them, and continue to
devote ourselves to prayer and to the service
of the word.' The whole assembly approved of
this proposal and elected Stephen, a man full
of faith and of the Holy Spirit, together with
Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas,
and Nicolaus of Antioch, a convert to Judaism.
They presented these to the apostles, who
prayed and laid their hands on them.

The word of the Lord continued to spread:
the number of disciples in Jerusalem was greatly
increased, and a large group of priests made
their submission to the faith.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM

Ps 32:1-2, 4-5, 18-19. R. v. 22

R. Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place
our trust in you. (or Alleluia!)

1. Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just; /
for praise is fitting for loyal hearts. / Give thanks
to the Lord upon the harp, / with a ten-stringed
lute sing him songs. R.

2. For the word of the Lord is faithful / and all
his works to be trusted. / The Lord loves justice
and right / and fills the earth with his love. R.

3. The Lord looks on those who revere him, /
on those who hope in his love, / to rescue
their souls from death, / to keep them alive in
famine. R.

SECOND READING

1 Pet 2:4-9

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood.

The Lord is the living stone, rejected by men
but chosen by God and precious to him; set
yourselves close to him so that you too, the holy
priesthood that offers the spiritual sacrifices
which Jesus Christ has made acceptable to
God, may be living stones making a spiritual
house. As scripture says: See how I lay in Zion
a precious cornerstone that I have chosen and
the man who rests his trust on it will not be
disappointed. That means that for you who are
believers, it is precious; but for unbelievers, the
stone rejected by the builders has proved to be
the keystone, a stone to stumble over, a rock to
bring men down. They stumble over it because
they do not believe in the word; it was the fate
in store for them.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood,
a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing
the praises of God who called you out of the
darkness into his wonderful light.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 14:6

Alleluia, alleluia! / I am the way, the
truth and the life, says the Lord; / no one
comes to the Father, except through me. /
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Jn 14:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
John.

I am the way, the truth and the life.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Trust in God still, and trust in me.

There are many rooms in my Father's house;
if there were not, I should have told you.

I am now going to prepare a place for you,
and after I have gone and prepared you
a place,

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Catholic Parish of St Kevin Eastwood



Weekend Masses: Vigil Sat 5:30pm,

Sun 7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am, 12noon (Chinese) & 6:00pm

Weekday Masses: Mon – Thurs. 7:30am, Fri 5:00pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Sat 5:00-5:20pm

Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Rosary & Novena: Tue 7-7:30pm

Cenacle Marian Movement of Laity: Thurs 7:00pm

(Holy Family Chapel)

Fifth Sunday of Easter – 10th May 2020



Our Deceased: Geoff Clarke, Young Hwan Ho, Yong Min Ho, Young Seok Seo, Soo Woog Jin, Maria Hur, Felix Beins, Cecile Beins, Jan Brayan, Mary Duck, Ces Regan, John Davidson; Roy & Bessie Landon and deceased members of Landon, Pigott, Stewart families, John & Bonnie Bowdern, Leslie & Isobel Johnson; Alan & Molly McNamara, Bill & Eileen Taylor, Amy Murry, Katherine Corbett, Win Tranor, Fr John Haseler, Sandra Walsh, Jim Grainger, Fr John Lyne, James Bertoldo and Mike Crestani.

Our Sick: Robert Lauw, Tenille Moujalli, June Phelan and Anne McIntyre, Adhy Guna S., Daisy & Nur Gouw and Henry Rheinberger

Upcoming Feast Day: Our Lady of Fatima, 13th of May

Parish News:

- **We thank all the parishioners who were able to donate towards Caritas' Project Compassion.** We were able to raise \$2996.10.
- **The Heartbeat Easter to Pentecost Series are now available.** We invite anyone who wish to do this program to contact the parish office. Email: parish@stkevinseastwood.org.au to get a copy.
- **The parish office is currently unattended. The best way to reach us is by email:** parish@stkevinseastwood.org.au. **For urgent matters ☎ Fr Martin at 0414 841 928.**
- **Thank you to all the parishioners who are still able to support the parish financially.** To donate, visit: <https://www.stkevinseastwood.org.au/> & click on the [SUPPORT US](#) button.



Parousia Media invites you to a series of FREE online Catholic Study Groups commencing on Mon 4th May. To be facilitated by Charbel Raish & Matthew-Hermann Tague. To register: <https://www.parousiamedia.com/study-groups/>. Info: matthewhermannntague@gmail.com

Join the world-wide virtual PENTECOST PILGRIMAGE featuring internationally acclaimed Catholic speakers. Apr 26-May 31. Register FREE: <https://www.pentecostpilgrimage.com>.

MAY IS THE MONTH OF MARY: From May 1-31, you are invited to participate in the Archbishop's Rosary Relay. To register visit: <https://www.sydneycatholic.org/>

CatholicCare outreach to the lonely and isolated: If you, or someone you know, could use help during this time, CCareline can connect you with a volunteer from your community. CCareline is a free and confidential helpline for counselling, relationships, parenting, ageing, disabilities, addictions, and mental health. **Call 13 18 19 Mon-Fri 8am- 6pm.**

Petition by Catholics to ask that No One Is Left Behind: As the COVID-19 pandemic tightens its grip, people seeking protection and migrants in vulnerable situations have been left with no safety net. Please join us by signing and sharing the Catholic petition to leave no one behind during the COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://www.change.org/nooneleftbehind>

Fifth Sunday of Easter, John 14: 1-12 (Gospel commentary provided by Liturgy Brisbane (www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/prepare/sunday-readings-and-family-prayer/))

We can thank “doubting Thomas” for the cornerstone of today’s gospel, Jesus’ declaration that he is “the Way, the Truth and the Life”. This and what leads up to it may have a familiar ring for many in the congregation. It’s a text that is often read at funeral services. It begins with words of assurance for the disciples whom Jesus had just disturbed by speaking about betrayal and denial. From this point on, for four full chapters of the gospel, Jesus opens his heart to them and to the Father. This discourse, unique to the gospel of John, is in the form of a “last testament” from a leader to his followers. After the dialogue between Jesus and Thomas and Philip that we hear today, almost all that follows is a monologue from Jesus.

Part of the appeal of John’s gospel lies in the conversations it records between Jesus and others. These give the gospel a human face. However, they can also be disconcerting. Often Jesus’ response to a question is either quite indirect or in the form of a theological pronouncement that only raises more questions. Such is the case when Thomas asks to be shown the way Jesus is going and when Philip asks him to show them the Father. Jesus takes advantage of these pragmatic questions to offer sublime teaching. We must expect the same treatment.

A LOVE BEYOND OUR UNDERSTANDING!

Some time ago a good friend of mine from Perth sent me this fascinating article on *elephants!* The article he sent me revealed the mysterious depth of wisdom, sensitivity, and appreciation that these massive animals can and do show towards people.

This insight was revealed when Lawrence Anthony died in Johannesburg in 2002, for many years he and his wife Francine lived just outside of one of the great African national game parks. Lawrence Anthony was widely known throughout South Africa as “The *Elephant Whisperer*.” He wrote a number of books on their nature as a result of his observing and travelling with them over many years. Lawrence for many years rescued and rehabilitated a number of elephants from dangerous situations. What they were and what he did would be fascinating to know!

Soon after he died his wife reported that within a day of his death a herd of 31 elephants travelled at least 20 kilometers and camped for 2 days and nights in front of their massive front yard. Somehow, they knew that their caring friend had died so they assembled to pay him their respects. After 2 days and nights of camping the 31 elephants then all travelled back to their homeland.

When I heard this amazing and true story it caused me to think how many other life events that have happened and are happening in our world is beyond our human comprehension.

In God we Trust! Fr Martin R Maunsell