

# 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.

### A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



Reproduction of this bulletin in any form prohibited. Published  
with ecclesiastical approval by ST PAULS PUBLICATIONS,  
PO Box 906, Strathfield NSW 2135. Tel 02 9394 3400 Fax 02 9746  
1140. Scripture readings from the Jerusalem Bible, published and  
© 1966, by Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co. Inc.  
are used by permission of the publishers. Psalm text from *The Psalms,  
A New Translation*, © 1963, The Grail (England), HarperCollins.  
New translation of the Order of Mass from *The Roman Missal*  
© 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation.  
All rights reserved. Artwork by Sr Dorothy Woodward rsj. Layout,  
commentaries and illustrations © St Pauls Publications, 2020.  
No 1824. Website: [www.stpauls.com.au](http://www.stpauls.com.au)

## '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,