

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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Reflections on the Gospel



FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER / A

THE SAVING WORD

10 MAY 2020

'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,