

# The Paper Pulpit

*(Reflections from the Pastor)*

## 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Easter

**Scripture:** *John 14:1-6 "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."*

**Meditation:** Years ago, huge parts of Canada and the United States were blacked out by the failure of an electric fuse the size of a football. All power to those areas funneled through that single fuse. Someone compared the fuse to Jesus, "As that tiny fuse was the passageway by which power went forth to the United States and Canada, so Jesus is the tiny passageway by which we go forth to the Father and to God's peace."

Do you allow any troubles to rob you of God's peace? As much as we try to avoid it, we all inevitably encounter troubles and difficulties, and sometimes more than we think we can handle. Think of the mothers in Nigeria, whose kidnapped daughters were not with them for Mother's Day. I cannot even begin to imagine how they are feeling and coping. Jesus knew 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.

The phrase "*God's House*" is used over and over again in the Scriptures to refer to the Temple in Jerusalem. It's the place where God's Name is to be worshiped and praised. It's the place where the Presence of God dwells among His People. It's the place where the Heavenly Realm and the Earthly realm (the heavens and the earth) meet together. And, whether we're talking about the House of God below or the House of God above, we're talking about a place that is, first and foremost, God's. Jesus promises to prepare a place in His Father's house for us. And that's where this passage strikes me in the gut: In God's House, where His Name is worshipped, and where He dwells... I have a place. A spot. Prepared just for me. By the Savior of the World. I am invited in. You're invited in. We're invited in. At that point I don't care about anything earthly. We get a spot in God's House. Prepared just for us.

So, we have a place prepared for us. How do we get there? If heaven is our destination, how can we be sure we know the way without some kind of map or guide? The Lord Jesus does not simply give advice and direction. He, personally, is the way. He is that fuse, that passageway. 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 life. The Way, Truth and Life are given to us in the Sacraments. We are given divine life in the Sacrament of Baptism. Jesus forgives us our sins in confession. He feeds us with his body and blood in Holy Communion. He gives us the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Even if we receive Divine Life in the sacraments we still may not be at peace.

So, do you allow any troubles to rob you of God's peace? As much as we try to avoid it, we all inevitably encounter troubles and difficulties, and sometimes more than we think we can handle! Jesus knew 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. I have a place. A spot. Made ready just for me. By the Savior of the World. I am invited in. You're invited in. We're invited in.

**Men of the Parish:** I am asking all men of the parish to join our Men's Group under the umbrella of the Knights of Columbus. We will have a First Degree after the 10:00 Mass followed by a light lunch. Even if you didn't let me know, it is not too late. We'll meet in church right after Mass.

**Hospital, nursing home and home visits:** Deacon Rich and I want to make sure we are visiting all folks who are in the hospital, nursing home or homebound. If you know of someone who is in an area nursing home or homebound and would like visits, please let Deacon Rich know.

*Sincerely in Christ, Fr. Jim Trempe*