

I go and prepare a place for you

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Fifth Sunday of Easter) is John 14:1-14. This text is Jesus comforting his disciples on the evening of his death. They are spoken in the Upper Room.

The words "*Do not let your hearts be troubled*" come after matters that were solemn and stressful for the disciples: the washing of their feet by Jesus (13:1-17), the announcement of his betrayal by one of them (13:18-30), the news of his imminent departure from them (13:31-35), and the prediction of Peter's denial (13:36-38). In this chapter Jesus makes a number of reassuring promises.

Both "believe" words are imperative. This is the cure for their fear. He gives what He asks for of them. To trust in God is to trust in Jesus. To trust in Jesus is to trust in the Creator of the universe who created all the stars, gives them each a name and brings out each every night and there are none missing (Is. 40:26).

Jesus reinforces this promise by saying, "*If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? (v. 2).*" What he is saying to his disciples and to us is that he will not be yanking our chain but delivering on every promise that he made.

There are powerful images in the sentence "*I am the way, the truth, and the life.*" "I am" goes back to God's promise to Moses in Exodus. It means that he always has been and always will be with his people as their God. When it comes to the "way" he is saying that he, Jesus, is not merely a way, but rather the only way to God. It is a path that can be absolutely certain. We can trust Jesus because all that is real and true is found in Him. He is God the Word, and through His Word He reveals His salvation. Jesus is the source of physical and spiritual life. Whoever believes in Him has eternal life. (3:16).

Jesus also patiently takes time to address some of the concerns a few of the disciples have. To Thomas' doubts Jesus points out "*no one comes to the Father except through me*" (v. 6). This phrase puts the finishing touches on his "*I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life*" declaration that there is only way to get to heaven. For Philip's query Jesus suggests that Jesus had repeatedly pointed to the fact that he and the Father are one, but now he reteaches it.

Jesus wraps it all up by pointing out to them what their future will be like after he has gone to heaven, He says they will do many good works because they believe in him as their Savior. Furthermore, he is available to help whenever his children come to him.

A part of this text is frequently used at funeral services. It is meant to bring comfort to the mourners. But, it can give great hope and reassurance to all Christians as they journey through this life.

Prayer: O risen Lord, with great anticipation I long for my home in heaven. Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.
(TLSB)