

*Christ is risen; He is risen indeed, Alleluia.*

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*

When you look at Jesus what do you see?

The first disciples saw a man from Nazareth, born of Mary.

They saw a friend, a companion, a leader, a healer.

They saw someone very wise, very religious; smart and kind.

When the disciples looked at Jesus they saw someone who cared for them  
and loved them and would do anything for them.

But in the end, they saw a man, and not God.

And just like others that they cared for, they were *troubled* to hear this Man talk about leaving.  
Their *hearts were troubled* (14:1) because Jesus said He was going somewhere and they couldn't  
come with Him (13:33, 36).

They wanted to follow Him. Peter even said,

*“Lord, why can't I follow You now? I will lay down my life for You.”* (13:37)

No one wanted Jesus to go—*wherever He was going*—without them.

We're the same way.

Who wants to lose a loved one?

Or a friend move cities, or a dear coworker switch jobs, or a son or daughter leave home...  
for good?

We hate “good-bye's,” and yet we have to say them all the time.

But things are different with Jesus.

Here we've spent the last four weeks celebrating His resurrection appearances.

And now, He's preparing us for His ascension.

But His ascension to heaven is *not* His leaving us.

Heaven is *not* in some distant land far away, or far above, or far removed from us.

We're just like Thomas and Philip in today's reading.

When we look at Jesus, we see a man and we tend to forget that this Man is God.

Easter is all about *seeing* God.

Easter morning we joined “*Mary Magdalene and the other Mary*” (Mt 28:1) at the empty tomb,  
seeing the risen Christ.

Then, with Doubting Thomas, we saw and touched and poked around in the wounds of Christ,  
all getting a little bloody in the process!

Then we walked along the Emmaus Road with the two disciples,  
 chatting with the *Stranger*, who warmed our heart and opened *our eyes* to see Jesus in all  
 the Scriptures and in the Breaking of the Bread!

And then last week we saw Jesus as the door into the sheepfold, the gate into everlasting life—  
 by whose voice we recognize our Shepherd.

So again today—today, when we see Jesus we see “*the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*” (Jn 14:6)

But here we must be very careful.  
 There’s a dangerous and heretical way for Christ to be the Way.  
 And it’s this we often fall into.

Christ isn’t *the Way* simply by example.  
 He’s not just a pointer towards the Father—  
 like a GPS or an instruction manual.

He’s not a means to an end, or a path towards something greater, or our ticket to heaven.  
 Christ doesn’t get you somewhere else beyond Him.  
 He *is* everything!

He *is* our life and truth and way.  
 There isn’t any other.  
 There’s no such thing as heaven apart from Jesus.  
 There’s no meeting with the Father that doesn’t take place *in Christ*.  
 There’s nothing more than Him, because in Him is *everything*—  
 when you see Jesus, you see God and man united—and you are in Him.

But how often we look beyond Christ, or for something more.  
 When life is hard, we try to escape.  
 Whether it’s sports or cars or drinks or sex, we’re looking for a way out,  
 we want rest for our troubled hearts—and rarely do we turn to the body and blood.

When Jesus says that He is the Way and the Truth and the Life,  
 and that no one can come to the Father except by Him,  
 He says that to you who are searching, and trying, and failing.  
 And He offers you Himself.

He says it to you whose hearts are troubled, by your kids or your health; your work or your sin.  
 He says it to you who are stressed out and discouraged, and ready for a way out.

“*Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me.*” (14:1)

Jesus is the God/Man crucified and risen for you.  
 In Him is your forgiveness. In Him is your life. He is your salvation.  
 And you are in Christ.

So all is yours. Even now. Already.

This, of course, is no excuse to sit back with your legs up.  
 Being in Christ isn't something you check off your to-do list.  
 You're in Christ only by the blood He shed for you,  
     and the water into which He washed your sin away,  
     and by His Body and Blood with which He continually feeds you.

Now, to be in Christ, to live in Him as the Way, means truly to live.  
 It means to live by the truth—  
     forsaking every lie and falsehood, every word of gossip and false doctrine.  
 It means to live for the sake of others—  
     for the poor and defenseless, the weak and downtrodden—  
     for your neighbor, and even your enemy.  
 It means to live in constant self-sacrifice, giving yourself up just as Christ did for you.

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in Me will also do the works that I do.” (14:12)*

To have Jesus as the Way and the Truth and the Life, isn't a once and done sort of thing—  
 but it's now who you are and what you do, *for you are in Christ.*

Your life is now cruciform—that is, cross-shaped.  
 It's marked by redemption that reaches out to others, and suffering—even unjustly.  
 It doesn't trust for a moment in yourself—  
     either your works or your will or your feelings or your belief—  
     it trusts in Christ alone; because He is your life.

And He is your truth.  
 Anything outside of Him—anything hidden and dark and secret and deceptive—flee from these.

And He is your way.  
 Though you sometimes stumble from side to side, as in a drunken stupor—  
     He will not leave you or forsake you.

For you are His and He is yours.  
 The Father is in Him and He is in the Father.  
 And your home is with God in Christ.  
 And that is where you are.  
 So let not your hearts be troubled.

When you look at Jesus you are to see the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and yourself...  
 along with the whole Church of all times and all places.  
 And this meal is the foretaste of that great feast to come!

*Christ is risen; He is risen indeed, Alleluia.*

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*