

After the Heart of Jesus ...

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.

You have faith in God; have faith also in me.

In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.

If there were not,

would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?

And if I go and prepare a place for you,

I will come back again and take you to myself,

so that where I am you also may be.

Where I am going you know the way.”

Thomas said to him,

“Master, 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 except through me.

If you know me, then you will also know my Father.”

John 14:1-6



Today’s Gospel reading is one that is often selected to be read at the funerals of parents who have done well in raising their families in faith. I suspect the passage is chosen because it speaks of the Father’s house in heaven and Jesus going there to prepare a place for his followers. A comforting image at funerals is often one of a loved one going ahead to the Father’s house before us, getting things in order and ready for when we are called home. And the way to the Father’s house is the same as it has always been, through Jesus who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Our whole approach to life in general is transformed when we understand that our life here on earth is lived as part of a journey to the Father’s house. Jesus’ words today begin with “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” Knowing that our life here is about going to the Father’s house can help us let go of much fear in this life. Are we on our way to the Father’s house? Do we know the way? Is Jesus our way, truth, and life?



I hope you have had some time this week to enjoy on television the stories of Pope Benedict’s visit in the United States. Here is an excerpt of his message to us in coming for this visit: “I have chosen as the theme of my journey three simple but essential words: ‘Christ our hope’. Following in the footsteps of my venerable predecessors, Paul VI and John Paul II, I shall come to United States of America as Pope for the first time, to proclaim this great truth: Jesus Christ is hope for men and women of every language, race, culture and social condition. Yes, Christ is the face of God present among us. Through him, our lives reach fullness, and together, both as individuals and peoples, we can become a family united by fraternal love, according to the eternal plan of God the Father. I know how deeply rooted this Gospel message is in your country. I am coming to share it with you, in a series of celebrations and gatherings. I shall also bring the message of Christian hope to the great Assembly of the United Nations, to the representatives of all the peoples of the world. Indeed, the world has

greater need of hope than ever: hope for peace, for justice, and for freedom, but this hope can never be fulfilled without obedience to the law of God, which Christ brought to fulfillment in the commandment to love one another. Do to others as you would have them do to you, and avoid doing what you would not want them to do. This ‘golden rule’ is given in the Bible, but it is valid for all people, including non-believers. It is the law written on the human heart; on this we can all agree, so that when we come to address other matters we can do so in a positive and constructive manner for the entire human community.”

Please see the announcements in this bulletin regarding two upcoming end-of-the-year parish events, the State of the Parish Meeting on Sunday, May 4, from 1:30 to 3:30 in the McDonald Parish Center, and the Pentecost Vigil Prayer and Ministry Appreciation Reception on Saturday, May 11, beginning with prayer at 7:00 PM in the Church and reception following in the McDonald Parish Center. Both of these are important firsts for our parish community. Next weekend, progress reports for the ongoing St. Walter Pastoral Plan will be distributed with bulletins at all the Masses. These will also be available at the State of the Parish Meeting.

Thank you to everyone who has already made a pledge or gift to the Annual Catholic Ministries Appeal for the Joliet Diocese. Our parish goal for this year’s appeal is \$113,763. St. Walter Parish has a strong tradition of going over goal, and I pray that this kind of generous and sacrificial support will continue this year. Please make a pledge or gift this week that reflects a desire to support the important work of the diocesan Church.



As we journey to the Father’s house, may we live ...

After the Heart of Jesus!

Father John