

Four weeks into the Easter season scripture has sent us back to that upper room to the discussion which took place after the Last Supper and prior to retiring to the garden for betrayal.

There is a need for us to return.

There is always the need.

In the Gospel today the end of the earthly ministry for Jesus is approaching, with the cross looming before him.

Jesus has just had the Passover meal with his disciples.

He has washed their feet.

He has foretold his betrayal.

he has seen Judas depart.

He has predicted Peter's denial.

He has told them he is leaving.

Thomas, on hearing Jesus is going, questions 'how will we know the way?', obviously fearing he, they, may get lost ... and left. Perhaps there are times we also have a same fear. Philip asks for proof - to be shown the Father – so he, they, can be sure. Philip is obviously not convinced. Perhaps we are not always convinced.

All that is required in the answer of their questions is just himself. Just the messy, intimate, ever evolving, and often confusing business of relationship. Of trust, patience, and vulnerability.

Let not your hearts be troubled. Says Jesus. Believe.

If it was only that easy – for anyone, especially for those with questions of their heart.

Many hearts are troubled - troubled to the point of breaking.

Perhaps your heart.

I pray you can hear Jesus say to you - do not be troubled.

He will show you the way as he is the Way.

He will show you the truth as he is the truth.

He will show you your life as he is life.

Troubled hearts have a way of getting our attention.

Very few us, after facing a trial, come out the same way we entered.

Jesus understood this, and wants to prepare his disciples for the way ahead.

We know we are not all Jesus calls us to be.

We spend too much and share too little;

we judge too many and love too few;

we wait too long and act too late.

Our hearts can be troubled.

Jesus spent the last moments he has with his disciples calming their fears.

And continues to want to be the one to calm our fears.

Jesus looks at his disciples, who have just watched Judas leave the dinner table on a mission of betrayal, and tells them do not be afraid. There is a haven for them within his Father's home. There is a room for them there. There is room. Unlike Bethlehem, with no room, with Jesus there is room.

God is roomy. God is generous. God is hospitable.

God can handle our doubts, our fears, and our questions.

And God's offer of belonging extends far beyond the confines of this mortal life. "I go and prepare a place for you," Jesus says as he stands in the shadow of his own cross. You have a place with me. You have a place with God.

The promise of home.

Home in God. Home with God.

Jesus wants them to be ready, to be calm, to be free of a troubled heart.

Jesus wants them to know the way, the truth, and life.

Jesus wants them to know him – the way, the truth, the life.

And Jesus has that same want for us. To know him and all he is for us.

Home.

The way, the truth, the life.

The great Catholic theologian, Thomas à Kempis, said,

"Without the way, there is no going;
without the truth, there is no knowing; and
without the life, there is no living."

Throughout John's Gospel this has been the theme. In Jesus, we have life.

In the very beginning of his Gospel that's what John tells us,

"In the beginning was the Word ... and in him was life and
the life was the light of all people."

At the end of his Gospel, John says

"These things are written that you may have life in his name."

That is God's promise to us.

In Jesus, we have the way and the truth and the life that God creates us to be.

In Jesus, we find the blessing that God has ready for us.

In Jesus, we find the power for living and the essence of life itself.

This is a Gospel for our time. The story - your story, my story, our collective story of this precarious, precious moment - will not end in death. Though we might feel alone and frightened, the Way is open before us. We know it. We know Jesus, and

because we know Jesus, we know God. The Way will bear us home. Do not let your hearts be troubled.