

HOMILY — SUNDAY EASTER V A

Acts 6:1-7

Ps 33 R. Let your love be upon us, Lord, even as we hope in you.

1 Peter 2:4-9

Jn 14:1-12

I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (Jn 14:6)

Today's Gospel passage is a challenging one that hits to the core of Christianity, as Jesus' words from the Last Supper echo in our hearts. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and by no other name is there salvation. Despite what the world likes to tell us so often, not every religion is equal, not every path leads to salvation, not every way of life is good. As Peter himself preached, *There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).*

My brothers and sisters, as I've said before, Jesus isn't just 'some nice guy who teaches nice things'; He isn't just 'another prophet' among many, nor is He just 'one way' to find God: Jesus is the **only** way to find God! **He's** the cornerstone on which is built not only our Faith but the whole of creation (cf. 1 Pet 2:6-8). No one else came to us from the Father; no one else revealed the Father to us; no one else died for our sins or is risen from the dead! Our salvation, our faith, our hope rest on Him, and on His union with the Father (cf. Jn 14:9-11)!

I am the way: Jesus is the Way to the Father, and His Way is the Cross. That means, then, that as disciples of Jesus we, too, need to battle against sin and temptation. We need to persevere in carrying the crosses of our lives and not despair nor lose heart: *Do not let your hearts be troubled*, said Jesus, *Believe in God, believe also in me (Jn 14:1).*

You see, we're not alone in carrying our crosses: Jesus is there with us in each moment of suffering, in each moment of temptation, waiting for us to hand Him our crosses. Just as He had the help of Simon on His Way of the Cross, Jesus will carry our crosses; we only need to let Him do it. We need to resist the temptation to do it all by ourselves, because the truth is, we can't. Evil, temptation, sin, death..., they're all bigger than us; we cannot defeat them. But Jesus already has! We just need to allow Him to make His victory alive in us. That's why we must constantly get back up and turn to Jesus, imploring His mercy. That's why we need turn to Jesus in prayer, everyday (!), to get to know Him and His Way, and to allow Him to share His victory with us.

And so, to turn to Jesus also means to follow Him: *I am the truth*, He said. The Way of Jesus is Truth: it demands from us conversion — a conversion not merely of heart but also of life. With Jesus, we cannot live like pagans; we cannot 'believe' in Jesus and then live like those who don't; there's no truth in that! To believe in Jesus means to live like Him, to imitate Him.

Through Baptism, we've become a *new creation (2 Cor 5:17)*, a *chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people*, says St. Peter (1 Pet 2:9); we've been called out of darkness to live in Christ's marvellous light (1 Pet 2:9)!

That means, as St. Paul says, we need to *cast off the deeds of darkness and live honourably as in the day* (Rom 13:12, 13). There's no following Jesus if we're not willing to change the way we live. Again, this is why we need to turn to Jesus in prayer every day(!), because without Him we just cannot do it. Prayer helps us to know Jesus better and to grow in our love for Him. And through prayer, the Holy Spirit will show us what in our lives needs to change and give us the grace and courage to carry it out. And yes, that change is often painful, because we've grown attached to our sins and to our way of life. But again, this is why Jesus' Way is the Way of the Cross: we must *put to death ... whatever in [us] is earthly* (Col 3:5), *for if [we] live according to the flesh, [we] will die; but if by the Spirit [we] put to death the deeds of the body, [we] will live* (Rom 8:13).

And this, my brothers and sisters, is why Jesus is the Life! Only through the Cross can we come to the Resurrection, and only by turning to Jesus and carrying our crosses can we have eternal life. There is no other Way!

This is what it means to believe in Jesus; this is what it means to allow the Holy Spirit to guide our hearts and lives into the communion of the Trinity, so that where Christ is, there we may be also (cf. Jn 14:3), and not merely for a moment but for all eternity.

Let your love be upon us, then, Lord, even as we hope in you (Psalm refrain); show yourself to us, Lord, so that, through you, we may come to the Father. Amen.