

## Reading for Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### Jesus Comforts His Disciples

**14** “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

### Jesus the Way to the Father

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup>If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

## Reflection on the reading: John 14:1-14

Did you know that heart trouble is the leading cause of death in the world today? I'm referring to the medical kind of heart trouble. According to the World Health Organisation it is the cause of more than 17.9 million deaths a year, which accounts for 31% of all deaths. The most common kind of heart trouble is coronary heart disease, which is the failure of the blood circulation to the heart muscles, resulting in a heart attack.

Because of this many of us have been advised by our doctors to change our diet to low-fat and high-fibre food, and to change our lifestyle to include more physical exercise and better stress management. Some of us may be taking cholesterol-lowering medicine. Others may have had other remedies prescribed for heart trouble.

Today we are going to look at a different kind of heart trouble - one that afflicts not our blood-pumping heart, but the very centre of our being our personality, the seat of all our emotions.

This kind of heart trouble can afflict anyone - young or old, good or bad. Nobody is immune to it. Even Jesus was not immune to it. In John's Gospel we see some instances when His own heart was troubled. One time was when Jesus felt the sorrow of losing His good friend Lazarus. Another was just after His triumphal entry into Jerusalem when He told Philip and Andrew that His hour had come - Jesus told them that His heart was troubled. The next time was when Jesus revealed to His disciples that one of them would betray Him.

All these show that there is nothing wrong with having a troubled heart - it is part of this life.

What is important is how we deal with a troubled heart. For this, we need to make use of the right remedy. It seems sensible to consult the great physician, Jesus Himself. He understands perfectly what it feels like to be troubled in His own heart, which means His remedy is bound to be most effective one to deal with our troubles.

I think most of us are no strangers to troubled hearts and in the present pandemic we have good cause to be so. Life for all of us has taken an unexpected turn. Perhaps the person you depended on a lot suddenly has had to leave you alone and you wonder how you will cope with life without them there. There are so many unanswered questions and we may find ourselves asking 'Why has this happened? Why can't things just remain the as they were?' I suspect these were the same questions the disciples asked when Jesus told them he was leaving them.

We, today, look at a world we don't recognise or really understand.

The remedy? We must apply to our troubled hearts those tender words of comfort which Jesus gave to His disciples when He said "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me."

This is a testing time for us not just as individuals or as Christians but also as a church, the body of Christ. I am proud when I see reports of selfless giving of time, effort, food, money – the list could go on. I see so much that mirrors the teaching of Jesus. Many of those following that basic "human" instinct to help their fellow beings, are not people of faith. But

they witness to the very God that created them in their mother's womb. It is my prayer that this will be a time when we see not just what troubles our hearts but the opportunity to be part of a revival of faith unparalleled for centuries.

We have treatments and remedies for Heart Disease but many people ignore even the simplest instructions about diet, exercise and smoking which are the major cause of that horrendous 17.9 million deaths each year.

Today, as we listen to what the government wants us to do. We need to be clearly and openly Christians as we do what is needed to bring us to the victory over the Corona virus, so others will come to faith, as they did when people saw how the Christians lived and supported each other and those around them in the early church.

This Friday we celebrate VE day which marked entering the final stage of World War II. We are poised, as a nation, to enter the final stages of fighting the virus. Let's pray with confidence and persistence that Jesus calms our troubled hearts and brings our eyes to focus on His promise to be with us always and everywhere and show us what He wants us to do.

Remember in the reading today when Thomas asked Jesus how would we know which way to go. Jesus said "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If we follow His teaching and love our neighbour as ourselves, we will meet some day with Jesus in the place he has already prepared a place for us.

Stay safe, be kind to your neighbour, keep smiling, walk in the footsteps of Jesus and remember we are here for each other.

Accept the blessings the Lord has for you and know that you are loved. Amen