

Sunday Message

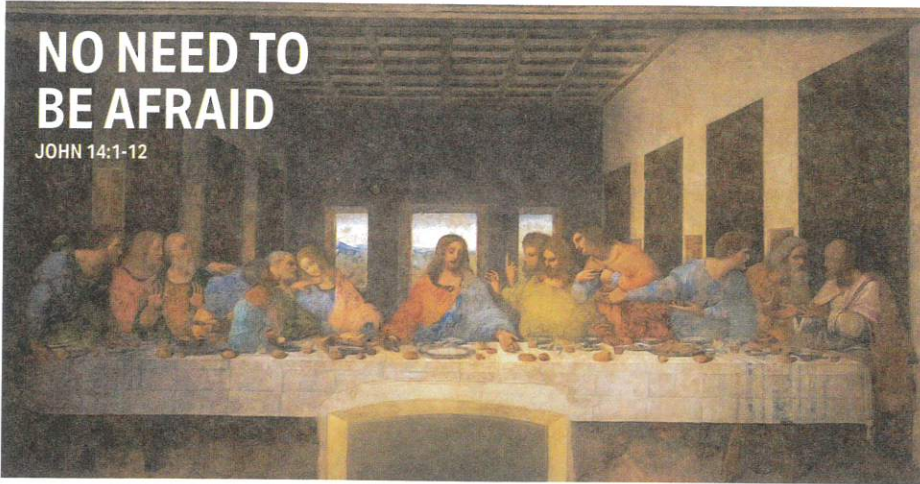
5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE WORD

Year A • 3 May 2026 • Psalter Week 1

NO NEED TO BE AFRAID

JOHN 14:1-12



Today's Gospel is taken from the last great discourse in John's Gospel, known as the Farewell Discourse, and is Jesus' final teaching to his disciples at the Last Supper.

Jesus looks to the future. He comforts those he is leaving behind. They are to trust in God as he did. They will all be reunited in the Father's house. In ancient times, when a group of travellers needed accommodation for the night, they often sent one of their number ahead to reserve a place in the inn. Jesus comforts his disciples by telling them that the accommodation in the Father's house is more luxurious than that of a rough-and-ready inn. It has many rooms, so they shouldn't worry about being refused entry. Jesus will return when the place is prepared to take them with him.

Some of the disciples are puzzled. If they don't know where Jesus is going, Thomas asks, how will they find the way? Jesus replies with one of the great 'I AM' sayings: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one can come to the Father except through me." Just as he is the gate that offers protection and freedom of movement for his flock to the pastures of eternal life, he is also the way to God. To know Jesus is to know the Father. To follow his way and know his truth is to receive eternal life. ■

REFLECT

There is much talk about truth these days. We hear about fake news and deliberate misinformation and the efforts of online bots and trolls to mislead and confuse people. Some politicians dismiss any uncomfortable facts or stories they don't like as 'fake news'. The advent of Artificial Intelligence technologies will make it even more difficult to distinguish what is genuine from what is not. We won't be sure if a video of a politician making an inflammatory statement or purporting to show someone in a compromising position is real or is 'deep fake'. We will need to be constantly on our guard because it will be increasingly difficult to separate what is true from what is false.

For us Christians, Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. Follow his way and we will never be led astray. For us Christians, the highest form of truth is love of God and humankind; for whenever love is realised, God is present.

Pope Francis told a general audience in Rome in 2018 that "truth is not spoken so much with a speech. It is a way of being, a way of living, and you see it in every single word." Theologian Fr Tomas Halik says Jesus wasn't interested in how much of the Jewish law people knew but only in whether they kept the law of love. "If you hold to my teaching," Jesus told his followers, "then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Follow Jesus' teaching by living a life of love, and we will live lives that are true.

This is what Alexei Navalny tried to do. A human rights lawyer and one of Vladimir Putin's most prominent opponents, Alexei grew up an atheist in the old communist Soviet Union but became a Christian. He was inspired especially by the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel, and the beatitude, Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right. Alexei hungered for what is right and it became his motivation. In prison he decided to learn off

DO

There is so much fake news on social media nowadays. Think about how you consume news. Are you easily misled or misinformed? How might you better protect yourself and your loved ones from fake news and deliberate distortion?

PRAY

Today's Gospel is popular at funerals. Pray for your deceased loved ones, that they may enjoy eternal life in the Father's house.

SAY

"Lord, help me to follow your way, live your truth, and model my life on yours. Amen."

LEARN

If we want to know what God is like, we need look no further than Jesus.

Jesus shows us the way to salvation.

God has made us a chosen race, a royal priesthood.

For Christians, the highest form of truth is love of God and humankind.

by heart all 111 verses of the Sermon on the Mount and to do so in four languages, Russian, French, English and Latin. He wanted to imprint God's word on his heart.

Alexei endured years of intimidation, imprisonment, and brutality because of his commitment to justice and truth. He died mysteriously in prison in the Arctic circle on 16 February 2024, aged 48, because the Putin regime was afraid of him.

Here was a man who believed in the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and witnessed to it, even at the cost of his freedom and of his life. He knew that the highest form of truth is love of God and neighbour.

Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Know his truth, follow his lead, live his way, and we will enjoy life in the heavenly kingdom. No fake news or deliberate misinformation will ever block our path. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*O sing a new song to the Lord,
for he has worked wonders;
in the sight of the nations
he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us,
that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism
may, under your protective care, bear much fruit
and come to the joys of life eternal.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING Acts 6:1-7

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

In those days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. And the Twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, 'It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers and sisters, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.' And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the Apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 33(32):1-2, 4-5, 18-19. R. 22

**R: *May your merciful love be upon us,
as we hope in you, O LORD.***

Or **Alleluia.**

1. Ring out your joy to the LORD, O you just;
for praise is fitting from the upright.
Give thanks to the LORD upon the harp;
with a ten-stringed lute sing him songs. **R.**
2. The word of the LORD is upright,
and all his works to be trusted.
The LORD loves justice and right,
and his merciful love fills the earth. **R.**
3. Yes, the LORD's eyes are on those who fear him,
who hope in his merciful love,
to rescue their soul from death,
to keep them alive in famine. **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Peter 2:4-9

A reading from the First Letter of Saint Peter.

Beloved: Come to the Lord, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious. You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: 'Behold, I am laying in

Sion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.' So the honour is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone', and 'A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.' They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL John 14:6

R: *Alleluia, alleluia.*

I am the way, and the truth, and the life, says the Lord.

No one comes to the Father except through me.

R: *Alleluia.*

GOSPEL John 14:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, 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 had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"?

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

'Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O God, who by the wonderful exchange effected in this sacrifice have made us partakers of the one supreme Godhead, grant, we pray, that, as we have come to know your truth, we may make it ours by a worthy way of life. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord.
Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in
plenty, alleluia.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.