

**GOSPEL**

JOHN 14:1-12

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house; if there were not, I should have told you. I am now going to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you know me, you know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.' Philip said, 'Lord, let us see the Father and then we shall be satisfied.' 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip,' said Jesus to him 'and you still do not know me? 'To have seen me is to have seen the Father, so how can you say, "Let us see the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak as from myself: it is the Father, living in me, who is doing this work. You must believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; believe it on the evidence of this work, if for no other reason. 'I tell you most solemnly, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, he will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father.'

**A REFLECTION BY POPE FRANCIS**

Faith is not alienation or a crooked deal, but a path of beauty and truth marked out by Jesus to prepare our eyes to gaze without glasses at "the marvellous face of God", in the definitive dwelling place prepared for each one of us. It is an invitation not to let ourselves be gripped by fear. To live life as a preparation for seeing better, hearing better and loving more.

Jesus' words, are very beautiful. At a time of taking leave, Jesus speaks to his disciples from his heart. He knows they are sad, for they realize that things are not going well. So now Jesus encourages them, cheers them, reassures them and unfolds before them a horizon of hope. "Let not your hearts be troubled". "I am going to prepare a place for you". What is this preparation?, How is it done? What is this place like? What does preparing the place mean? Renting a room in heaven?

Preparing a place means preparing our capacities for enjoying, for seeing, for hearing and for understanding the beauty of what awaits us, of that homeland for which we are bound.

Through faith Jesus gives us this strong hope and the courage to greet the homeland from afar. This is our Christian hope. Jesus tells us: "I will come!" Christians are women and men of hope precisely because they hope for the Lord to come again. Look at the beauty of how the Bible begins and ends. At the beginning it reads: "In the beginning," in other words, "when things began." And Revelation ends with the prayer: 'Come, Lord Jesus'. Indeed, all the Church awaits the coming of Jesus: Jesus will come again. This is Christian hope.

May Jesus give us the humility to let ourselves be prepared, that is, to let the Lord prepare the definitive dwelling place in our heart, in our sight and in our hearing".

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

- Jesus tells us, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me." What does it mean to trust in God for you? How can we grow in our trust?
- If we have seen Jesus, we have seen the Father in heaven. What does Jesus' character and actions tell us about God? In what ways does thinking about God like this help your understanding of him?
- If we believe in Jesus, we will do the same and even greater works than him. Have you ever experienced this in your own life? Have you ever witnessed a miracle in your life or the life of someone you know personally?

**PRAYER**

*Spend some time in prayer with one another*

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/ describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. "Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray")
3. Move to prayers of thanks and praise to God.
4. Pray for each others' prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps reciting the 'Glory Be' or similar prayer.