

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

The Way, the Truth, the Life Fourth Week of Easter Friday, May 16, 2014 7:30 PM
Acts 13:26-33; **Jn 14:1-6** (Healing Mass) (Live every day in trust and recognize that God is glorified in everything.)

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

This is the most popular gospel at funerals. It also happens to be the gospel for this coming Sunday. Why is it so popular? I believe that it speaks directly to people who are in want, who are suffering, because here **Jesus is presenting himself as “the way.”** The term “way” is used in many religions Buddhism in particular, Dhamma, and Yoga, Dharma. In general, it’s a way of talking about the right way of living. Jesus is presenting himself as **the right way of living.** And yet Jesus himself, although it’s true he was able to do marvelous things, he was not in any way exempt from suffering. “Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered.” This gospel in particular puts the two together very well, that Jesus, who embodies God’s love and extends that to people in merciful acts of healing, **himself is not exempt from woundedness.** He is not exempt from pain. He is not exempt from sin. He allows himself to become a target. He allows himself to become a victim.

In this particular text he says, “You have faith in God,” as do all believers of all religions. But he says, “Have faith in me also,” which is a way of saying **have faith in God’s creation,** because Jesus is the Word of God, who has come into creation and become part of creation. So now we have to trust in the creation itself. It’s all **part of God’s splendid plan that has a lot of difficulties tied to it.** Jesus knew all the difficulties first hand. This is the way. **The way is to recognize that Jesus is walking in our world**—in our world, in our creation, in our presence, with us. And that walk with us, the walk of the embodied God, is **full of pain and weakness and suffering and woundedness.**

But he can say, **“I am the life.”** The life is there; even on the Cross the life is there. It’s **the life that he surrenders to the Father. “I am the truth.”** It’s not the truth one reads in books, even holy books, even the Bible or the catechism or the Creed. It’s the truth that is so real that it breathes and it walks and it hurts—**God coming right into everything that we are.** Why? So that we can learn to trust in the whole process of creation, that **we can trust even though the world is full of evil.** We have to see that evil does not overcome; darkness

does not overcome the light. It attacks the light; it does not overcome the light. Evil will not overcome us either, not if we trust.

“In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.” It’s simply beyond our ability to imagine what God has prepared for us. St. Paul says that. “Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, the imagination of man has not imagined what God has prepared.” But the point here is **I will come to take you there.** It’s not a matter of you having to know the way. I will come and get you. So Thomas’ statement, “We don’t know the way,” is beside the point. I will come and get you. What you have to do is **live every day in trust and recognize that God is glorified in everything,** as God is glorified in Jesus’ life and his miracles, in his hunger and in his eating, in his joy and in his pain, God was glorified. God is glorified in all **as long as it is God that we really want,** if we put nothing else first and we recognize that there can be no obstacle to God or to God’s goodness, except not wanting him, except rejecting him, except not trusting him.

So in all things we can be at peace. And we can learn that in a certain way **our brokenness is something that can be our benefit. We can learn to be more humble and more compassionate toward others.** We can learn how to be more humble and compassionate **toward ourselves.** We can learn the truth that Jesus embodied in his brokenness, in his woundedness.

We pray for healing because we know that Jesus often healed, and we know that God is love and loves us and wants us to be healthy, to be whole, to be full of life. We realize this is the goal. We just don’t know exactly how and when it will all be accomplished. We acknowledge we are simply on the journey. We are on the way, and we find the way in him.