



St Marylebone
Parish Church

11am Holy Eucharist Sunday after Ascension

(Easter 7, Sunday before Pentecost)

Readings:

The Acts of the Apostles 1.6-14

The Holy Gospel according to St John 17.1-11

Is it a series of cryptic riddles?

On these Sundays of Easter (and even more in the weekday Mass readings) we've had days and days of St John recording Jesus speaking in what could appear a load of interweaving cryptic riddles. *I am this, because the Father is this, and you are that.*

They aren't cryptic riddles, of course. **The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are being revealed in a coherent image**; slowly being illuminated by different shards of illumination.

St John's purpose is that God's glory be revealed, and that our whole existence might find its purpose and being within that glory through the Christ.

Gospels like today's are not a sequence of riddles. They are more akin to all the elements of a symphony being drawn together before our eyes.

Where is it all heading? The glorious life of the Trinity into which we are invited to immerse ourselves now and forever.

So what about now? **How does this change our here and now?**

Well, for that we have to *join the orchestra* that is playing this great symphony, and for *that* we have to look to next Sunday.

The reading from The Acts of the Apostles has told us today again of Jesus's ascension into heaven, as we celebrated on Thursday. And now we are gathered, in our homes, with Mary and the Apostles, praying, waiting.

After 9 days the Holy Spirit descends like tongues of flame and the Church is sent out to *be* the Church. 20 centuries later, here we are, the same family, the same purpose, the same Spirit.

The Spirit is the conductor and animator of this great orchestra across time and space. This great symphony of truth and life.

The Spirit is leading us forward.

Even in every moment of our here and now. **The great conductor is conforming our lives day after day, year after year, into the glorious orchestra of God's glory.**

The true purpose and flourishing of our lives is to allow the Spirit of God to be our conductor. To attune our lives to His rhythm, if you like. To resound the beautiful sound of His love in us and through us. Like St Johns Gospel, we are to be formed (all that we are and do, in the most everyday ways and in the deepest ways) into a single glorious music: Gods glory resounding throughout the universe.

And just as for Mary and the Apostles, all this is *ahead* of us. It always is. **We cannot do it by our own power, and there is no reason to be discouraged.** We are simply to attend to the conductor, afresh, from now. To tune our lives into His movement: prayer, love, service, reading, Sacrament (even spiritually, rather corporeally receiving Holy Communion as is sadly the case at the moment).

We've got to give the Holy Spirit the maximum possible chance of getting at us, and bringing us to life as only God can; into this great symphony of life and glory, now and forever.

In whole-hearted *full-fat* discipleship we are called to step forward boldly that God's glory may resound in us. There is no greater purpose or reality in the whole universe. We've just got to give the Holy Spirit

the maximum possible chance of getting at us, and bringing us to life as only God can.