



St Marylebone  
Parish Church

## Easter 5 2020 11 am

*Acts 7.55-60; John 14.1-14 (reference to 1 Peter 2.12)*

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Alleluia!*

Jesus assertion that he is the Way, the Truth and the Life, comes in response to a series of questions posed by Peter, Thomas and Philip.

Jesus had begun to talk plainly and openly about his end and, as ever seemed to be the case, the disciples were confused and uncertain.

Jesus language about a journey puzzled them, and the journey about which he spoke was not a journey-to-a-place but to the Father.

However uncomprehending the disciples were, they did seem to sense that by talking about a journey Jesus was also talking about his death.

Where Jesus was going, they could not go - at that time at least; but the time would come for them when they too would make the journey.

Jesus was going on ahead of them and *his* journey home to the Father, through his death on the cross, would ensure that they - and those who would come after them, as well as those who had gone before them - would deliver them safely at their destination.

Jesus' incarnation, Passion, death, burial, Resurrection and Ascension would lead them safely and surely home to the place of many mansions prepared for them.

*This* is why Jesus is “the Way”: Jesus is the route and guide and pledge of their safe arrival and we, with them, will, at last, be where he is.

It is no coincidence that before it was known as anything else, ‘Christianity’ was known as ‘The Way’: a style of life, a pattern of living, a way of being, living, doing, hoping, dying. A way that was noticeably and markedly different from other ways of being, living, doing, hoping or dying.

At some point the Church sadly lost the truth of this and settled into structures and buildings and hierarchies and all that came in their settled, institutional wake.

During these days of lockdown, the Church, ‘Church’ with a capital “C”, is having to learn again that we must not, cannot, confuse the Church’s structures and buildings and hierarchies and all that is dependent upon them with the living Way, the Way that is Jesus.

Our worship, no matter how sincere, how beautiful, isn’t going to make new Christians, but the way *we live*, the way *we move*,

the way we walk day to day in the company of him who is 'The Way' will!

St. Peter, writes of this in his epistle<sup>i</sup>, *“Let all your behaviour be such that even outsiders can recognise it as good.”*

The Greek word we translate as 'behaviour' - and which the Authorized Version translates as 'conversation'- is '*anastrophein*' which means 'walking up and down in the streets'; this is what matters - *how* we journey, *how* we walk in the Way with Jesus; how we go about our daily business, how we relate to the world.

By following 'The Way' we participate in Christ Jesus, he lives in us and he leads us home to the Father; Jesus leads us to the place which he has gone ahead to prepare for us and, by walking in his Way, we participate in the very life of God and God lives in and through us.

By walking The Way we live the Easter life and we bring the Resurrection into every situation we encounter. Heaven itself breaks into every hell.

A classic description of living in The Way, comes from an anonymous second century writing known as The Epistle to Diognetus; the writer put it like this:

*Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind either in locality or in speech or in customs. They don't live in cities of their own, nor do they use some different language, nor practise an extraordinary kind of life. Christians live in cities made up of Greeks and Barbarians and they wear the local*

*dress and eat local food and in all other respects they get on with life like everyone else, yet they do so only as sojourners and whilst they bear their share in all things as citizens, they endure all hardships as strangers for every foreign country is a homeland to them and every homeland is foreign to them. Christians obey the established laws, even going beyond what is required of them. In a word, what the soul is in the body, Christians are in the world and they hold the world together.*

Those who follow in The Way of Jesus have to live the Easter life in every moment of every day, in every situation - because we can do nothing else. We carry the Resurrection with us into every situation: God's heaven breaks into every hell and holds the world together.

Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Let us walk with confidence in his Way, find him to be the Truth and may the way we walk and believe lead others home to the Father, the source and summit of all Life. Alleluia!