

Reflection on the 5th Sunday of Easter – I am the way & the truth & the life

First Reading: Acts 6:1-7

Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:4-9

Gospel: John 14:1-12

In a homily a few weeks ago, I was taking my nephew “down the shore” (as they say in Philly), but in this week’s homily, I am bringing another nephew home from the shore. He was about three years old and lived in Nottingham which is not too far from Quarryville. On our way home, he fell asleep (Thank God!) in his car seat. As I crossed the Delaware Memorial Bridge, I took a wrong turn and got lost, which is not unusual for me. I thought to myself, I am glad he is asleep. Even if he was awake, he probably wouldn’t notice I made a wrong turn. He’s too young! After I thought that, he woke up, looked around and said, “Are we lost?” I couldn’t believe it! How did he figure that out? Kids are always smarter than we think.

When I made that wrong turn, the scenery was not familiar and anxiety started to set in. Keep in mind this was before GPS, Google Maps, and cell phones. In the same way, the virus and the return from the shut-down can give us the same feeling. We haven’t been down this road in the past, and we are in a sense “lost” as to how to get back to normal. “Are we lost?” Well, we are still in the “red phase” according to the governor on Friday. I do have some hopeful news to tell you. When we do enter into the “yellow phase” we are able to open up, and we have guidelines of what that looks like. Ah, some direction and hope!

In today’s Gospel St. Thomas said to Jesus, “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” Jesus responds, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Notice the order in which Jesus responds. I never thought of this before. When we know the way and when we know the truth, we will

have life to the fullest! Our way is to follow Jesus. He knows the future and the way we need to go. When we know the way, we are free of worry and anxiety. We can peacefully and confidently go on our way because our way is Jesus' way.

When I went to Italy for our parish pilgrimage, we always had a tour guide to show us the way; we just needed to follow her, and we would be on the right path. Jesus is our "tour guide" through life. When we follow him, we are on the right path even with all the distractions and hardships on the way.

So how do we follow Jesus? It's not too complicated. We pray, follow the Ten Commandments, follow the precepts of the Church, and participate in the Sacraments (when we return to church of course). How do we not follow Jesus? We do the opposite. Then, we lose our way and enter the dark side. When that happens our hearts definitely become troubled. When we follow Jesus and do these basic things, then as it says at the beginning of the Gospel, our hearts will not be troubled. We have a choice. Who will you follow today?

Also, let us continue to pray for those infected with this virus and all those who are affected indirectly – especially our healthcare workers, cleaners, and all those who are considered "necessary" workers. We humbly ask, Lord, for those of us out of work, that we may safely return to work very soon.

God bless,

Fr. Mark