

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Easter EF 2021

James 1:17-21

John 16: 5-14

*5. But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?*

*6. But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.*

*7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

*8. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

*9. Of sin, because they believe not on me;*

*10. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;*

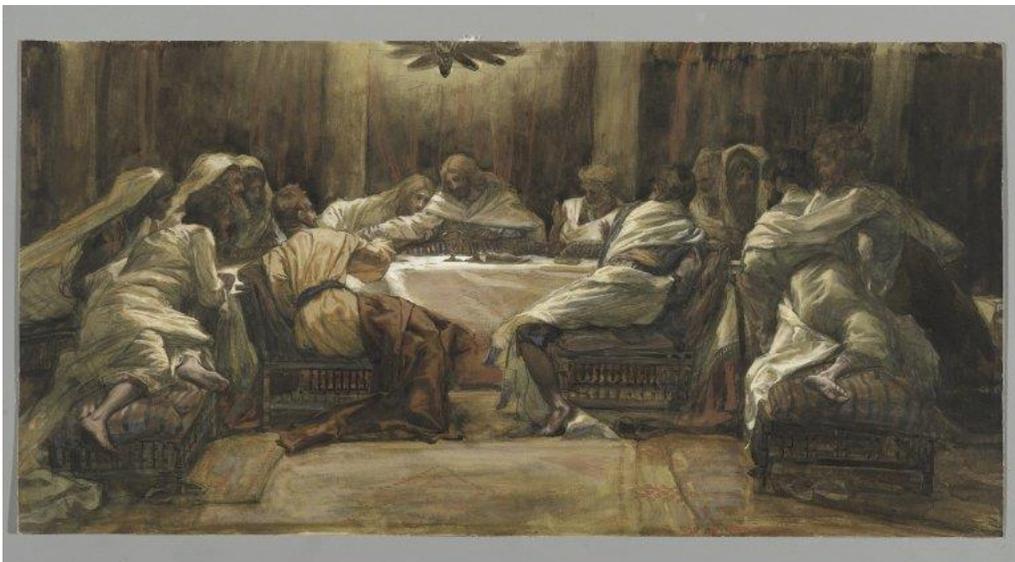
*11. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*

*12. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.*

*13. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come.*

*14. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

Aquinas, Thomas. Catena Aurea: Volume 1-4 (p. 2416). Primedia E-Launch. Kindle Edition.



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Jesus says:

*But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?*

This scene occurs on Maundy Thursday at the Last Supper when Jesus delivers his final discourse.

Jesus knows what is coming.

Up to now, Jesus has told his disciples that his hour had not yet come.

Jesus had just now dipped his bread and gave it to Judas, the betrayer, telling him, *“That thou doest, do quickly.”*

Now is the hour.

Jesus prepares His disciples for the worst, yet offers them ultimate hope and consolation.

Maybe the disciples are not asking *Whither goest thou?* but I’m asking, **“Hey, Jesus, where are you going?”**

Think about it.

Jesus had led an incredible life.

He preached repentance.

He was a champion for the poor and powerless.

He healed the infirm and crippled.

He pricked the consciences of those who oppressed.

He raised Lazarus from the dead.

**“But, hey Jesus, where are you going?” WHY?**

*Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:*

Jesus is going.

He is going to face his hour.

His passion leads to his death on the cross and his descent to Hell.

Jesus rises on the third day.

He goes in ascension to his Father.

*Whither goest thou?*

## WHY?

Allow me to share with you a bit from the sermon of St. Augustine.<sup>i</sup>

*He said this, not because of any inequality between the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, but because the presence among them of the Son of man would be an obstacle to the coming of Him Who was not less than he.*

*It was therefore required that the form of the servant be taken from their sight; for seeing it they supposed that Christ was only that which they beheld with their eyes.*

*What does he mean by saying, If I go not the Paraclete will not come to you, but that you cannot receive the Holy Ghost as long as you continue to know Christ as a man. But when Christ departed from them in His Body, not alone was the Holy Spirit present to them, but the Father also, and the Son.*

Again:

*But when Christ departed from them in His Body, not alone was the Holy Spirit present to them, but the Father also, and the Son.*

God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, is made present to us whom, through the cross, are transformed in the new creation. (2 Cor 5:17)

The Acts of the Apostles goes on to tell our story, the story of us disciples, Spirit-filled and Spirit-led in the love of the Holy Trinity.

Acts tells of Peter leading an incredible life.

He preached repentance.

He was a champion for the poor and powerless.

He healed the infirm and crippled.

He pricked the consciences of those who oppressed.

He raised Tabitha from the dead.

He even laid down his life for love of God and neighbor.

Peter was able to lay down his life because, in faith, he knew Jesus' resurrection awaited him as well.

Why did Jesus bodily go?

So that the Spirit from the Father and through the Son could fill the hearts of his disciples and make of them, and of us, a new creation.

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also: and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. (Jn 14:12)*  
Aquinas, Thomas. *Catena Aurea: Volume 1-4* (p. 2375). Primedia E-Launch. Kindle Edition.

Today, there are 2 billion Christians on this earth.

There are two billion of us so that if we allow Christ to remain in us and we in him, we can be Jesus' saving presence.

We can preach repentance.

We can be champions for the poor and powerless.

We can heal the infirm and crippled.

We can prick the consciences of those who oppress.

We can selflessly commit our lives to each other, even to the point of laying them down.

We can do so confident of Jesus' promise of his resurrection for us, as long as we abide in him.

Why did Jesus go?

He goes so that He is always with us, with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

He goes so that we can act as the Body of Christ for each other.

With 2 billion of us, imagine the magnitude of God's healing and justice and love.

What greater love is there than this?

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<sup>i</sup> Augustine, *The Trinity*, I, 9; *The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers, Volume II*, translated by M. F. Toal, D.D., Preservation Press, p. 338