

Saint Thomas and Saint Thomas of the Air Church  
The Third Sunday after Easter  
April 21, 2024  
rmcneely+

“ . . . and I will see you again,”

On this Sunday and for the next three Sundays  
Saint John takes us back to the night of the Last Supper  
The institution of our Holy Communion  
The washing of feet  
The betrayal.

We are there in the Upper Room  
With Jesus and the twelve  
They don't know what we know:  
It will be for the last time.

Before the sun sets again,  
He will be dead  
In His mother's arms at the foot of the Cross.

It is the climax of His three-year Earthly Ministry.

One last time to prepare them for what is to come  
One last time to instruct  
To inspire  
To instill in them what they would need  
To spread the Gospel  
The story of the Good News  
To establish the church  
That would carry the Word around the globe.  
To give them what they would need to withstand  
their martyred deaths.  
One last discourse. . .  
what we would know as “His Last Discourse”.

John, the eyewitness, was there and preserved what happened  
And what He said.

Jesus had let them know what was going to happen  
Did they understand His words?  
We think not.

It would be later that they put it all together  
And in a flash of recognition  
They understood what He had told them  
They recalled His words.

The Last Discourse contains many thoughts and messages.  
The one St John gives us this day  
Was for them  
But is also what we need.

He told them that while they wept and lamented  
The World would rejoice.

We can only imagine the depth of their despair  
When they learned of His crucifixion.  
But we know of our own weeping and lamentation  
For Him  
And for the times in our lives when life takes its toll.  
While the World rejoices.  
While the secularists of our day  
Gloat at our anguish  
Their transitory and mistaken affirmation  
that all we believe  
by faith,  
Is illusory.

Jesus forewarned them that it would happen  
He wanted to arm them against the cruelty of the World  
The World ruled by the prince of darkness.

There is a mighty weapon of defense against the onslaught.  
 One that sometimes is just beyond our recall;  
     One that sometimes gathers dust on the shelf.

Jesus gave them and eternally gives us  
     HOPE.

Not “hope” as we know it today.  
 Not a wish for something we want to happen in the future.

That night in the upper room, He promised them and He promises  
 us:

*“I will see you again  
 and your heart  
 shall rejoice;  
 and your joy  
 no man taketh away.”*

Our hope is the absolute and solid knowledge  
     Affirmation and expectancy  
     That we will see Him again  
     Eternally  
     And we shall rejoice.

Hope as it is understood in Christianity  
     Is one of the three theological virtues, a gift from God  
     Along with Faith and Charity,  
     They are the God given qualities of our lives  
     That form the foundation of Christian Life.  
     The attributes that bring us to God.  
     That give us the ability to follow His Will in our lives.

That night in the Upper Room  
     Jesus gave them and gives us  
     hope.

With hope we know to an absolute certainty  
 That Jesus will complete what He began that night.

On the third day, the Apostles were witnesses to the Resurrection  
 They saw, heard and felt  
 The affirmation  
 The expectation  
 Personified in Him.  
 Hope was verified, confirmed and validated.

It is our hope  
 Our Christian Hope  
 That carries us through the dark times of our lives.  
 And it is a powerful force throughout the world.

In the famous work of Alighieri Dante, “the Divine Comedy”  
 Specifically, the “Inferno” of that work  
 Dante describes his journey into Hell.  
 As he reaches the gates of Hell  
 There is a sign above the portal that reads  
     *“Abandon hope  
     All ye who enter here.”*

In our fallen world  
 The nihilists  
 The atheists  
 The secularists  
 Are all about quashing and destroying our hope.

The Anglican Province of Christ the King  
 is a continuing province born in 1977  
 at the convention of St Louis.  
 Our Archbishop Robert Morse was asked to give the sermon to  
 close the convention.

In that sermon, He described our vocation, clergy and laity alike is  
 To give our people  
 Hope, faith and strength.

38 years ago he founded this very church  
 In the city named for a Saint,  
 On a street named after the Sacraments

As a fortress,  
 a bulwark  
 of that vocation of  
 Hope.  
 From which we can and will continue  
 To offer hope.

Our hope is in the love of God.

The 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish mystic, priest, poet of the Carmelites  
 Saint John of the Cross  
 Told this true story  
 Mentioned by Archbishop Morse near the end of his sermon:

At the monastery in Andalusia resided a brother of the order,  
 A pock-marked peasant  
 Bent with age.  
 Illiterate and untutored  
 Ignored, unseen and unknown.  
 He worked in the monastery  
     Opening doors  
     Scrubbing floors on his hands and knees  
     Dragging baggage

Suddenly he was stricken in death agony  
 And began to slip away.  
 St John of the Cross was with him

And suddenly  
 The old man rose up  
 and with a new face  
 Aglow and transformed in joy  
 He said

I see it, I see it, over and over  
 He said "I see it".  
 St John asked him  
 Brother, what do you see?  
 And after a time the old man said his last words:  
 I see love.

In that is our Hope.  
 The vision that sustains us in a pilgrimage of hardship  
 Is the Love of God  
 And our desire to share it.  
 That love calls us to our individual sacrifice.

Our hope carries us through.

As Jesus told them that night  
 He tells us:

*"Ye shall weep and lament  
 but the world shall rejoice:  
 and ye shall be sorrowful  
 but your sorrow  
 shall be turned into joy.  
 And ye now therefore have sorrow:  
 But I will see you again,  
 And your heart shall rejoice  
 And your joy  
 No man taketh from you".*

