

Saint Thomas and Saint Thomas of the Air Church
Third Sunday after Easter
April 26, 2026

A little while and ye shall not see me. And again a little while and ye shall see me.

Belinda and I are blessed with grandchildren. They used to have us over to their house to play Hide and Seek.

It was surprising that in this era of electronic everything that Hide & Seek had survived computerization and was still known and enjoyed among our little ones even though it requires nothing purchased to play the game and there were no screens.

You remember Hide & Seek -- one child is "it" who counts to 100 or as far as a 5 year old can count. At the end of the count "it" calls out "Ready or not here I come" and the game is on. The child who is "it" seeks out the other players until all of them have been found and the last one found is "it" for the next round. We had hours of fun with H&S in my family when I was a kid especially when my 10 cousins got together.

There is an element of Hide & Seek in today's Gospel.

St John takes us back to that night in Jerusalem
To the Upper Room.
Where he 12 would be gathered for the last time.
Only Jesus knew what was coming
And that the 12 would not see Him again in human form.
John was there
An eyewitness to the dramatic events of that last night;
The Last Supper
On the eve of His crucifixion.

The night began as a routine observation of Passover,
The high holy time of the Jews.
But it quickly became something else.
The night became electric
Crackling with tension, fear and trepidation

Jesus gave them the Holy Communion
Their means by which to be with Him
He taught humility
Washed their feet
Reminded them that to lead was to serve.
He declared that one of them would betray him
And without naming him
Pointed him out
Privately told Judas to do what he planned
Quickly.

He gave them what theologians and Bible scholars would later call
The Farewell Discourse.
Today's Gospel and in fact the Gospels for the next 4 Sundays
All come from St John's account of the Farewell Discourse.
His last opportunity to instill in them
what they would need to know in order to survive
and to plant the seed of His Church.
But time was running out.

It is a poignant moment.
His words have great meaning for us
and surely for the Apostles.

You just know that in the terrible and dark hours
between the Last Supper and the Resurrection,
the dispersed Apostles must have re-played Jesus'
last words in their minds a hundred times
trying to recall everything He said

and trying to figure out what to do after His earthly death.

Isn't it interesting to note that at Eastertide, as it approaches Ascension,

we do the very same thing.—

The Gospels in the weeks following Easter,

Time after time we go back to that upper room in Jerusalem to the Last Supper.

We, just as the Apostles did, re-play Jesus' words of that last evening of his earthly ministry looking for meaning, for hope, for guidance.

Today we break into the Farewell Discourse near its end.

Jesus has told them many things

And we will return to them in the coming weeks

But now He is telling them again

That He will be going away.

In basic words, Jesus tells them what is about to unfold.

In a little while ye shall not see me.

And again in a little while and you shall see me.

I am going to the Father.

To us who know the rest of the story,

Jesus is describing what will unfold in the next 3 days

In the first "little while", some 18 hours;

He will be crucified and be lying dead

in His mother's arms

and buried in a sealed tomb.

In the next "little while"

They will see the risen Lord.

But the Apostles are befuddled and cannot understand a word of it.

I wonder if an Hebrew version of hide and seek crossed their minds.

Jesus knows His men

And knows they do not understand.

He leaves it there.

He takes them forward in time.
 tells them that soon they will weep
 But quickly assures them that their sorrow
 Shall be turned into joy.
 He warns them that the world will rejoice.

He tells them it would be like a woman's travail,
 the pain of childbirth.
 In the joy of the new baby,
 the mother soon loses the memory of the anguish
 it took to get there.

He reminds them that their sorrow too
 Would be turned into joy
 That no man could ever take from them.

Let's step out if the event for a moment.
 This thought about woman in travail was not new to the Apostles.
 It is scattered throughout the Old Testament
 (Genesis, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah).
 It was a thought that they had already heard
 and would have some meaning to them.

On the eve of His death, Jesus spoke of birth. Interesting.

Was He pointing to the birth of the New Covenant
 of which He spoke?
 The greatest of all deliveries
 Jesus, having by His death destroyed death
 And by His death
 delivered eternal life for the redeemed

Was it the New Birth of mankind into Christ's Church of which
 He spoke?

Was it His agony and the torment of those who loved Him,
 was that the anguish the Jesus was referring to
 that would be remembered no more
 for the joy of what was being delivered,
 brought into the world?

Jesus tried to explain to the Apostles what would come and to help
 them get ready.

He could be standing here in San Francisco with us today
 telling us just as He did them;
 how the world would rejoice at his death.
 How secularists would try to remove Him from our daily lives.
 Take away the symbols, reminders of His presence
 Remove Him from the public square
 Sequester Him to these 4 walls.

Jesus could stand here today and tell us “and ye now have sorrow”

He could be here,
 standing in St Thomas Church in San Francisco
 a city named for a saint
 on Sacramento a street named for the sacrament
 saying to us as He did them:

But I will see you again
 Your heart shall rejoice
 And
 Your joy, no man taketh from you

That joy rests not in all the monuments that have been the targets
 of the secularists

or
 the cement cross atop Mt. Davidson

or
the memorial cross in San Diego

or
the three crosses in the symbol and shield of Los Angeles
a city named for the angels.

or
the 10 commandment tablets on the very doors of the United States
Supreme Court:

It rests within each of us.

Right where our Lord put it
and wants it to reside to sustain us
and to help us ready ourselves for the time
in a little while
when we shall see Him again .

So when Jesus is “it”, finishes His counting and calls out “ Ready
or not here I come”
Be ready.

And know in your heart the joy He placed there,
no man taketh from you.

Amen