

## Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Apr 26th 2024

The passage of today's Gospel is taken from the first of three farewell speeches pronounced by Jesus at the Last Supper. They are called so because in them Jesus seems to dictate his will before death. We use this text in the Easter season for a very simple reason: a Will acquires its meaning only after the death of the person who dictated it. Easter is the most suitable time to understand and meditate on them.

The Farewell Discourse of the Gospel of John in some way, followed the pattern set by the Book of Deuteronomy, a book compiled centuries after the death of Moses, and written as though spoken by Moses; its true purpose was to interpret the message of Moses for the author's contemporaries. The Farewell Discourse in the Gospel was the attempt of the evangelist to summarise for his contemporaries the significance of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Jesus spoke of God as his Father – not only his Father but through and in him, also of the disciples. In speaking of places to stay, Jesus was not thinking of place but of something more general where God could be encountered as “at home.” The threatening death of Jesus would open up possibilities for the disciples to have a deeper appreciation of the world of Jesus, and of the Father. I will take you with me, so that you may be where I am.

Imagine in a family of newly wedded couples, when one of the spouses has to leave the home for a distant land for work. His or her promise would be, let me go and make arrangements there, and then I will take you to the place so that we can be together... The Bible has numerous times expressed the relationship between God and his people as one of the spousal relationships.

John the evangelist constructed this Discourse to assist the believers of his community to have a deeper appreciation of the relationship with Jesus and the Father. They had lived sixty years of life without the physical presence of Jesus. John reminds them that the way to the Father was the way with which they were already familiar: the way of believing, of entrusting themselves to Jesus' love, and, of being transformed by his love.

The misunderstanding put on the lips of Thomas provided the opportunity for the author to clarify and develop the theological theme. “I am the way, and the truth and the life ...

Yesterday we celebrated the feast of St. Catherine of Siena. Let us wind up today's reflection with a quotation from this Doctor of the Church. St. Catherine Says: “The Way to Heaven is Heaven because He said, He is the Way”