

Fifth Sunday of Easter

I am the Way

INTRODUCTION

Few of us would set off on a journey to a place we had not been to before, without a map or some guide to take with us. Nobody would set off with no idea of how to get there, for then we would certainly get lost! Today Jesus tells his disciples that they already know the way to the place he is going, even though they have never been there before. We will see how confused they became, and how Jesus explained all that they needed to know!

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and say Candle Prayer 3: *The light of God.*

SORRY

While he was in prison, Saint Paul wrote a letter to the people of Colossae, to remind them how they should live if they want to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. (*cf St Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:12-14, 23*):

You are God's chosen people. Always be ready to care for others, and to be kind and gentle. Be patient and calm and never boast about or be proud of your goodness. Just as God always forgives you, so you must always be forgiving towards others. Fill your hearts with love, and whatever you do, do it for God.

As the children close their eyes, read this prayer slowly:

Father, forgive us
if we have hurt anyone by our thoughts or actions,
and help us to forgive those who have hurt us.
We ask this through Jesus our Lord.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 2: *Light up our hearts.*

GOSPEL (*cf John 14:1-6*)

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Do not be afraid or worried, trust in me as you trust in God. In my Father's house there are many rooms, and I am going there to prepare a place for you. Then I shall come back to take you with me, and we will be together again. You already know the way to the place I am going.' Thomas felt unsure and asked Jesus, 'Lord how can we know the way, if we do not know where you are going?' Jesus answered 'I

am the way, the truth and the life. Through me you will know how to find my Father's house'

DISCUSSION

Why did the disciples feel anxious and afraid? – Because Jesus had told them that soon he would be leaving them.

When Jesus talked about going to his Father's house, where do you think he meant? – He was talking about Heaven.

Which disciple felt uncertain about what Jesus had told them?

Jesus said that he is 'the way'. Do you know what he meant? – The word 'way' can have several different meanings. Ask one of the children to demonstrate 'the way' to brush their hair or wash their hands, – they show us *how to do* something. Then ask another child to explain 'the way' to their house, – they tell us *how to find* somewhere. Jesus is 'the way' because he shows us what we must *do* so that we can *find* Heaven.

When we are born we begin our journey through life, following Jesus who shows us the way towards heaven. Our signposts which guide us as we travel are God's commandments and all the things Jesus taught us. If we follow these signposts and *do* what pleases God then we will *find* the right path which leads us to everlasting happiness.

ACTIVITY

Depending on the age range of the group, either get the children to draw around their feet and then cut out the 'footprints', or give out small foot cut-outs to be coloured. These can be used to follow the 'way to Heaven,' with signposts which help to show the way. Alternatively the children can draw or print onto the photocopied picture.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Before Jesus was born, the people of God used to sing and say prayers and poems called psalms. In this psalm they ask God to 'show them the way'. (*cf Psalm 25:4-5,8-9*)

Teach me your ways Lord,
make them known to me.

Teach me to walk in your truth,
for you are my Saviour
and I can always place my trust in you.

The Lord is just and good.
He shows the humble the way
and teaches them his will.

With loyalty and love
he leads all those who obey his commandments.