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Friday of the 4th Week of Easter

Date: Friday, May 16, 2025 | **Season:** Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Acts 13:26–33
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 2:6–11b | **Response:** Psalm 2:7bc
Gospel Acclamation: John 14:6
Gospel Reading: John 14:1–6
Preached at: the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House **in the** Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia**.**

In the readings today, the Scriptures guide us to encounter both the reality of God's eternal promises and the life-giving path that Jesus offers. We hear the story of Jesus' triumph over death, of his faithful followers receiving a promise that transcends time, and of a way—the way—that leads to the very heart of the Father.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of himself as "the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6), a declaration that captures the essence of the entire Gospel. These words, echoing through the centuries, are far more than an eloquent declaration of divine identity; they are an invitation. Jesus, as the incarnate Word, is not only the means by which we come to know God but is the living, breathing bridge between humanity and the divine. To walk in the way of Christ is to live out the truth of God's eternal love and to embrace the life that flows from that love. It is not merely knowledge about God that we receive in Jesus, but a profound communion with the Father—a life transformed, a life of the Resurrection.

The first reading from the Acts of the Apostles recounts Paul's bold proclamation in the synagogue of Antioch, where he tells the gathered people that the promises made by God to their ancestors are fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus. The apostle quotes the second Psalm: "You are my Son; this day I have begotten you" (Ps 2:7), declaring that Christ is the fulfillment of what God had long ago foretold. What we see in this passage is the way that God's plan unfolds—gradually, in the fullness of time, in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the culmination of all God's promises, the very revelation of divine truth. He is the answer to the deepest longings of the human heart, and through his resurrection, we are invited into a new relationship with God.

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The Psalm today paints a vivid picture of the kingship of God, where God's authority is affirmed, and his reign over all creation is established. It speaks of a world where justice is realized, and where those who oppose God's will face ultimate defeat. We can't help but notice that this sense of divine justice is not just about retribution but about the setting right of all things—about God bringing the world into harmony, restoring what was lost in the fall, and re-establishing peace. The Easter season, with its themes of resurrection and redemption, calls us to become part of this great work of restoration, to work for justice, peace, and dignity in the world.

These readings resonate deeply with the essence of Catholic Social Teaching, especially in the way they emphasize the dignity of the human person and the call for justice. Paul's proclamation is one of liberation—he is announcing that Jesus has set us free, that the promises are fulfilled, and that we are no longer bound by the forces of sin and death. This resonates powerfully with the reality many face in Zambia and other parts of the world today: the struggles for justice, for the rights of the marginalized, and for the dignity of the oppressed. Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that the Gospel is not just about individual salvation but also about the transformation of the world, bringing about a new society where the dignity of every person is upheld, where the poor are cared for, and where justice reigns.

As we reflect on this message, we must also reflect on the urgency of walking the way of Jesus—of living out the truth and embracing the life that he offers. This is not simply a journey of knowledge but one of radical transformation. In our day-to-day lives, we are called to embody the Gospel in our relationships, in our actions, and in our commitments to justice. We are invited to live as Jesus lived, to serve as he served, and to love as he loved. There is a challenge here to not let the world's values shape us but to allow Jesus's truth and life to be the guiding force in all that we do.

In a world that often offers paths that lead to division, fear, and despair, Jesus's words resound like a beacon: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me" (Jn 14:1). These words, so often spoken at times of grief or uncertainty, are an invitation to trust in the Lord, to place our hope in the promises of the resurrection, and to walk confidently in the way that leads to

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life. The journey is not always easy; indeed, it is fraught with challenges, but it is the only way that leads to the Father. It is the way that leads us to the fullness of life, now and forever.

In this Easter season, let us renew our commitment to that way—the way of justice, truth, and life. Let us take to heart the invitation to trust in Jesus and to follow him in the concrete realities of our lives. The Resurrection calls us to a deeper relationship with God and with one another, to a more just and peaceful world, and to a life of radical love and service.

As we reflect on the readings today, let us ask ourselves:

- How can I better live out the truth and the life of Jesus in my daily interactions and relationships?
- In what ways can I contribute to the promotion of justice and dignity for the marginalized in my community, inspired by the resurrection of Jesus?
- How can I deepen my trust in God's promises and remain steadfast in following Jesus, even in the face of uncertainty or challenges?

These questions invite us to a deeper engagement with the Scriptures and a more profound transformation in our own lives, so that we may live the fullness of the Resurrection every day, not just in theory, but in practice.

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today's readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.