

Reflection John 14: 23-29

It is too easy to consider this reading simply in the light of Pentecost – the references to the Holy Spirit and the Advocate to come. In doing this we may miss the reference to 'home' in the first verses: that Jesus and the Father will make their home with those who love them. There is a remarkable intimacy here, contained in the word 'home', not just a lodging place, a house, or a dwelling but a home. And home implies a warmth, a sense of familiarity and a settled-ness (so the opposite of 'a broken home' feels quite alien).

The surprise is that God is making God's home with us, very close to us. But really, perhaps we should not be surprised, since from the very first days of the incarnation and Jesus' actual birth to Mary, he has chosen to take on our human identity, and make his home with us by being one of us – and then, as we are still in the Easter Season, to suffer and die as a human being, only to point us towards an even greater closeness to God in the resurrection.

The image of the vine, in the following chapter (15) of John's Gospel, is one of a similar intimacy. We are to be grafted into the true vine which is Jesus, and so bear much fruit. The lovely word 'abide' is used here: abiding in Jesus and Jesus abiding in us. There is a similar intimacy and domesticity.

Here is an imperative to make our own homes and our Churches place of welcome and warmth, especially to the stranger, which reflect the welcome we have been given and the home provided to us by God.

Fr David



NEXT SUNDAY 01.06.25 Seventh Sunday of Easter
10.30am in the Church

READINGS: OT Acts 16: 16-34
NT Revelation 22: 12-14, 16, 17, 20, 21
GOSPEL John 17: 20-26



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St Thomas, Exeter

25th May 2025

Sixth Sunday of Easter

10.30am in the Church followed by APCM

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

100 Come ye faithful, raise the strain

356 O breath of life, come sweeping through

188 Guide me, O thou great Redeemer

Wednesday 28th May

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

2pm Young at Hearts

7.30pm PCC Meeting in the Hall

Thursday 29th May

9.30—11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter. 19 Maple Rd

Details from Jenny. 01392 498725

7pm Ascension Day Eucharist

Friday 30th May

9.30am Morning Prayer

10am Staff Meeting



Collect

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Acts 16: 9-15

During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them. We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshipper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home.' And she prevailed upon us.

Revelation 21: 10, 22-22.5

And in the spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The na-

tions will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. People will bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations. But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practises abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; ⁴they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.

John 14: 23-29

Jesus said, 'Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me. 'I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, "I am going away, and I am coming to you." If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe.'

Intercessions

Bidding: Lord be with us.

All Every step of the way

Post Communion

God our Father, whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life: may we thirst for you, the spring of life and source of goodness, through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

Notices

We are revising the **Year's Mind list** as it has become rather lengthy. We recognize that it is a sensitive matter and all those currently on this list from the year 2000 will be retained automatically. If you would like an older St Thomas name kept on this list please contact Ian or Fr David. Please note that if your relative or friend was a worshipper at Emmanuel or St Andrews, there are no dates with these names. So please speak to Ian or Fr David even if the date is 2000 onwards.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting takes place **today** after the service. There are vacancies for 1 Churchwarden and 3 PCC members. It is most important that we have 2 Churchwardens and a full PCC especially during the Interregnum as there are decisions to be made relating to the building and financial matters. For information and nomination forms please see Ian.

Cleaning the Church Volunteers are needed. Areas can be cleaned whenever it suits as long as there are to least two people. Speak to Ian.

The House Group meets fortnightly on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays in the month at Helen's house. For details see Mic or Ian.

Hospiscare 100 Miles in May: our churchwarden, Ian Totterdell, is taking part in Hospiscare's fundraising event '100 Miles in May'. This will involve running, cycling (and swimming) a total of 100 miles during this month. If you would like to support him, please visit <https://justgiving.com/page/ian-totterdell-3> or speak to Ian at a Sunday service.