

## **Fifth Sunday in Easter, May 3, 2026**

We know the importance of works in the spiritual life. We know so many passages in the New Testament speaking of our judgment and it doesn't say that we will simply be judged on faith. It says it will be judged based on how we lived it, basically. And so when the Lord is looking it is not just mere external performance, right? I went to church, I said my rosary, I did this, I did that. All of this external action. The Lord is looking for those good works to arise from the reality of an interior relationship with the Lord.

It's the gift of the Holy Spirit, divine charity, dwelling within us, that very naturally bears the fruit of good works. And so, it is that interior experience that we are chiefly interested in. We don't focus in our Christian life on the doing although the doing is important, very important. We allow the doing to arise from the being. So, we focus first and foremost on being. What is that interior reality of relationship with God? And it seems that the way we come to know our interior reality is in three particular dynamics: thoughts, feelings, and desires.

When we are tempted to thoughts and feelings and desires, we come to understand in a clearer way, what the Lord is doing inside, how the Lord is drawing us, how the Lord is leading us. It's in that very, very, depth of interior life that we ask the really important questions. Not just, you know, what am I having for lunch today or where am I going to drive tomorrow? But why am I here? What is my life about? What can I really put my trust in? What's going to bring me the satisfaction and happiness and peace and joy that I really desire in this life? What am I to believe in? Money? How am I called

to make some contribution to the world, to humanity, my family, et cetera. These are the deep questions that reside and arise in our interior experience. And it seems that Jesus, in today's Gospel, addresses that very deep interior experience, and he answers those deep questions.

He says, "I am the Way, and the Truth and the Light. No one comes to the Father except through me." So, he's talking about the very fundamental meaning of human existence. That God has created us for as I have said many times before, union with himself. It's God, the Father, who's always drawing us to himself through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. That's what we're made for. Nothing else is going to satisfy deeply as union with God the Father, through Christ in the Spirit, will satisfy. Nothing else. Nothing else is going to really fully answer those deep questions of the heart. Those deepest longings of the heart.

Jesus says, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Light." There is almost an invitation embedded in that statement. 'Allow me to be at the very core, the very center, the very heart of your life, and you will find what you're looking for. You don't have to go looking at all these other places.' Which is what we do, isn't it? We don't always want to trust that Jesus' words in the Gospel are true. We go in pursuit of happiness in other things - in created things.

We think that being able to do what we want to do in an unrestricted way will bring us happiness. Or if we have enough resources to purchase all the things that we'd like to have, then we would be happy. Or in a less materialistic frame, if there was just peace in my family, then I would really be happy. Or, if I were just regarded in the

community as a person of good character, a ‘do-gooder,’ someone that everyone likes, then I would be happy and I have that peace in my heart. Not all of that is bad, per se, like, to be respected, to have freedom to do the things that we love to do. But at the end of the day, Jesus says, *“I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. You're not going to find deep satisfaction in all that other stuff, even stuff that's really good.”* Like peace in the family, like unity of family and faith. All that is beautiful. But Jesus says, *“I am the answer to the deepest longings of your heart.”*

It's strange that we would resist such a truth, isn't it? Knowing how the Lord loves us, how the Lord cares for us, how the Lord longs for our happiness infinitely more than we do, right? The Lord created us for the fullness of life, the fullness of joy. Why in the world should we resist that? We just get confused sometimes. We fall for the enemy's lies; we fall for the counterfeit offerings. So, it's good sometimes, not rarely, I would say but frequently, to enter into that very deep interior life, and take a look at things - the thoughts, the desires, the feelings.

What am I grasping for? What am I going in pursuit of? How am I falling for the lie? How do I go in search in pursuit of a counterfeit good? Something that's less than the Way, the Truth, and the Light. How did I get distracted from the real path that leads to union with God that I was made for. It is good to ask the Lord to come into that interior place and shine the light of the Holy Spirit so that we can know where these places of resistance are. Not so that we can fix them, of course. It's not like the Lord comes and brings the light of the Holy Spirit to say, “See that, you better take care of that.” Instead, he shines the light on that and he says, “See that? That's something we need to address.” That's something he wants to

address. We're not exempt from all responsibility in that. The Lord wants us to play our part, but our part is to surrender those areas of resistance not to keep latching on to them. White knuckled gripping these things that we think are going to be the real fix in our life. Jesus is the Way and the Truth and the Light in an absolute sense, not just for some, not just for others, but for all. The invitation is in our subjective experience to let him be the Way and the Truth and Light, so we are looking at those desires, deep longings in our hearts to remember, he's the answer. He's the one who satisfies those longings. He's already at work in the desires drawing us to himself.

And so, we ask for the grace today to enter into that very interior reality, not just to think of our faith of doing this and doing that, even though the doing is important. But to invite the Lord in to help us examine those thoughts and feelings and desires, to see what is of him and what is not of him; to embrace all that is of him and to set aside and surrender all that is not of him. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Light. He wants to lead us to the Father. He wants to lead us into that marvelous dwelling place. He will come back again and take us to himself. Because his desire is that where he is, we also may be.