

Most of the time, we do not tend to think about the really big questions of life. Each day brings its own troubles, its own pleasures, and we tend to focus on the business of handling these and not the bigger issues and questions, such as : “What is the point of existence; “Why are we here? Why did God create the universe? Where is my life leading? What’s the point of it all?

Those are big questions, frightening questions, sometimes; not questions we ask every day; but there are times in our lives when something happens that upsets our daily routine – the death of a loved one, for example, and that leaves a great hole in our hearts and lives, or the news which most of us dread – the diagnosis of terminal illness – when such things happen, then those everyday concerns which seemed so important to us begin to look insubstantial compared with our loss or with the thought of our own demise, and we are just left with large questions – we wonder where we are going, what our destiny is.

And the reading we have heard from St John’s gospel invites us to ponder those questions.

Jesus tells his disciples that he will be leaving them, these are his final words to them. Don’t be afraid, he says, Trust me, and trust God.

This throws them into anxiety – they are about to lose him, and they have some big questions – How can we know the way to where you are going; how will we know what to do or where to go without you? Show us the Father; show us what to do; we can’t manage – we need you to give us a sense of direction.

So what reassurance does Jesus give them? Does he answer those big questions? Not exactly, nor does he hand them a map of their future with specific routes clearly arrowed – he doesn’t say “I have a way – this is the way you should go – in fact he says “I am the Way – I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No-one can come to the Father except through me.”

Jesus is the Way by which we can journey towards the fullness of God – God made himself known to us in the person of Jesus – Jesus is the face of God, the heart of God the Word of God; Jesus and the Father are one,

they are inseparable “I am in the Father and the Father is in me. To have seen me is to have seen the Father.”

Jesus is the Truth; he not only speaks the truth, but the fullness of the truth is found in him alone. Pontius Pilate asked Jesus “What is truth?” Not a theory only to be understood by clever people – but something real and meaningful – and we find it in Jesus, and in his teaching. In Jesus we see the truth about God, about creation, about the purpose of life, about our own destiny. This is the answer to Pontius Pilate’s question. Truth was standing there, right in front of him. We look to Jesus to reveal to us the truth about God.

Jesus is the Life – St John says at the beginning of his gospel, speaking of Jesus the Word of God – through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being, but through him. All that came to be had life in him.

We are here because Jesus wants us to be here; our very life is his gift; this gives us purpose, this gives us dignity – we are not an accident of fate, but a unique example of God’s loving will in creating us. And so our lives are meaningful and purposeful if we are

rooted and grounded in God, in the one Jesus called “Father”.

We can go forward on the journey of life with confidence in the knowledge that we belong to him. But that doesn’t mean we won’t have questions and doubts, that doesn’t mean we’ve got it all sewn up. We cannot grasp the mind of God, for the mystery of his existence will always baffle us – there are no neat little answers to the big questions in life.

All we know is that with him there is a sense of direction, a sense of purpose – as Jesus said, our hearts must not be troubled. We must just trust in God and in him. God is in control. We’re not, God is. He knows where everything is going, and where, when and how all creation will find its ultimate fulfilment. The Father and the Son are one, they indwell each other, and together they pour out their Spirit of love into creation. It is that same Holy Spirit which lives in our hearts, and fills us with that confidence that God’s love conquers all, that God’s love alone gives meaning and purpose to our lives.