

Easter 5A 2017
Knowing Our Dignity in Christ

Who we are, and how we think about ourselves, is important

- When we have a strong sense of *who* we are, rooted in the truth, then we know *how* to act
 - If you are a mother with a strong sense of what it means to be a mother, then you know *how* to raise your children
 - If you are married with a strong sense of commitment to your spouse, then you know *how* to live your life within the marriage covenant in faithfulness and truth
 - If you are single with a strong sense of commitment to your faith and work, then you *know* how to live in the world
- But when we have a false sense of who we are that is not rooted in the truth, or when we are not sure who we are
 - We live selfishly without regard for others
 - We are hesitant, timid
 - We are not sure how to act

Today we need a strong sense of Catholic identity

- The society in which we live is becoming increasingly secular
- By this I mean, it affirms that
 - *We* the measure of ourselves, a law unto ourselves
 - *We* determine what is right and wrong
 - *We* have no need for God, for what is beyond what we can hear and see, or for the community of faith

Today's readings provide two ways for us to strengthen our identity

- First, the Letter of Saint Peter teaches us
 - We are *living stones* being built into a spiritual house
 - We are a *priestly people* who offer a spiritual sacrifice to God
 - We have been *called out of darkness* into God's light
- Second, in the gospel Jesus assures us that
 - He has gone ahead of us to prepare a place for us
 - He is the way the truth and the life
 - If we see and hear him, we see and hear the Father
- If we live according to the vision today's readings scripture, we will know who we are and what to do
 - We will live as a community of faith, as God's priestly people, a spiritual house in which God dwells
 - We will live as people, whom God has called out of the darkness of sin into the glorious light of his grace

- We will follow Jesus in the way of discipleship because he is the way, the truth, and the life

These can difficult times to live as a Catholic Christian

- Some of our contemporaries no longer practice their faith
- Others ask why we continue to believe
- It is at these moments we must remember who we are in Christ what God has done for us
 - For when we know who we are in Christ
 - Then we know who we are in Christ, we know how to act

This is the secret of living as a Catholic in the world today:

- To know who we are in Christ
- To live according to our new life in Christ