

"I am going away, and I am coming to you." Jn. 14: 28

At the Last Supper, in these mysterious words, Jesus announces His coming Death and Resurrection to His Disciples.

And Jesus goes on to say - again, in words they won't fully understand until He rises from the dead: "I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe."

Jn. 14: 29

Then, with urgency in His voice, He says to them: "Rise, let us be on our way." Jn. 14: 30
Determinedly, steadfastly, and with a love stronger than death, He desires to meet His Death on the Cross for us.

I work a lot with bereaved people who have no particular religious faith in any God, let alone in Jesus, the: "Word [who] became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth." Jn. 1: 14
For them, when the person they love dies, it is a 'going away,' as of course it is for those of us who are Christians.

But to them, for the person they love - and when they think about their own death - it's an abyss. It's nothingness. It's annihilation.

It's as if an hermetically sealed door has been closed on their loved one, which will never open again.

They may console themselves by having poems read at the funeral about the person having just slipped into another room, or that death is nothing at all.

But really they don't believe that, because of their perception of the locked door, which death brings, because nobody has ever come back from the dead, have they?

Those who don't believe the stone's been rolled away, and who think the words that the women heard who went to Jesus' tomb in that moment when the death of night is about to give way to the new life of dawn: "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" Lk. 24: 5 - 6

Well, to them those: "Words [seem] like nonsense." Lk. 24: 11 because they think death is the end of life.

But if you've heard, and taken to heart, those words; and if you've actually met Jesus, the Risen One as your Saviour and Friend, then you know that: "Love changes everything: How you live and how you die. [And that] Nothing in the world will ever be the same."

Andrew Lloyd Webber/Don Black/ Charles Hart: Aspects Of Love; Love Changes Everything

Those words by Andrew Lloyd Webber are describing romantic love.

But they go much deeper; because they can speak to our hearts of the love with which Jesus loves us.

When we come to know Him intimately; when we hear Him knocking at the door of our life to enter in, and we prise open the rusty door to our heart, that's when His love changes everything for us.

Nothing in the world will ever be the same again for us.

Not only how we live, but how we die; how we face the ultimate destiny of our life can never be the same again.

Through His Cross, through His 'going away,' through His dying like a grain of wheat, through His rising from the dead, and walking out through the door of death, He truly comes to us.

Because of the stone being rolled away, and the Empty tomb, He's not only able to pass through closed doors in the outside world, as He does in order to cast out fear and give faith, and peace to the Disciples on the evening of the day of His Resurrection, He will also do the same for us in our lives.

Unlike 'Doubting Thomas,' we can't see, and touch Jesus in the same way He did.

But Jesus says to us: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Jn. 20: 29

Through faith we can, because Jesus has risen from the dead just as He promised He would.

He embraces all times, and places because He's smashed through the door of death forever.

Now He is with us: "Yesterday, today, and forever." Heb. 13: 8

Through our Baptism, as Paul tells us in Romans 6, we went to the Cross with Jesus; we went into the tomb with Jesus; we rose from the abyss of death with Jesus to new, eternal, and true life. In the early days of the Church there was a custom that the Bishop, Priest or Deacon, after they'd finished preaching, would shout out to the people: 'Conversi ad Dominum' - 'Turn now towards the Lord.'

This meant that they would turn towards the East, towards the rising sun; the sign of Christ's Resurrection.

But this outward sign symbolised an interior action; conversion.

The turning of our entire life towards Jesus Christ; towards the true light; towards the: "Light of the world" Jn.8: 12; towards the living God.

I'd like to link those words to the words Father Paul will use in a few moments at the beginning of the Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer:

'Sursum corda' - 'Lift up your hearts.' Lift up your hearts, your inner self.

Turn away from sin, and be faithful to the Gospel; as we were told on Ash Wednesday when the ashes were put on our foreheads.

Turn away from sin, and turn ever anew towards Him who is: "The way, and the truth, and the life." Jn. 14: 6

At this hour, let us thank the Risen Lord who, through the power of His Word, and of the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, draws us towards the holy flame of His love.

Conversi ad Dominum - Turn now towards the Lord, and walk with Him along the path that leads to eternal life.