

## John 14:11-14

14:11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves.

14:12 Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

14:13 I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14:14 If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

### Homily: Greater Works

Jesus turned tap water into top-shelf wine. Jesus multiplied a few loaves, and in so doing fed the multitudes. Jesus stilled rough seas, shared healing mercies, raised Lazarus. These are Incredible, incomprehensible miracles, and they are a prelude to the most profound and provocative revelation of our faith: Jesus' own resurrection.

And I will tell you, I've enjoyed our texts the last four weeks, because they've given us a chance to reimagine, and to retrace, and to ponder, right alongside the earliest disciples, the audacious, outrageous, extraordinary, too-good-to-be-true revelation of not just that very first Sunday morning, but every Sunday morning thereafter.

Yes, Jesus lives. That's amazing, but so is the *how* of the revelation. We know that Jesus lives, when like, Mary, we hear him call our names. We know that Jesus lives, when like those first disciples, he is revealed in the blessing and breaking of bread. We know that Jesus lives, when like Thomas, we get to see with our own eyes. And perhaps best of all, we are made to know, even when we can't see with our own eyes, even when our journey is asynchronous, asymmetrical, and just-plain-messy.

I want to tell you though, today, on the Fifth Sunday of Easter, in another pericope from John's gospel, we find what might be the most pleasantly audacious and provocative revelation of the season. Allow to set the scene.

This week, after a lot of time in a post-Easter world, we're going back to Maundy Thursday, in a shared Passover meal that includes Jesus' farewell discourses. He's telling the disciples, "I've got to leave you, but there are some things I want you to take comfort in."

We hear about mansions with lots of rooms. In other words, Jesus tells us of God's abundance. God's love, God's presence, God's hospitality are never in short supply.

And Jesus tells us that we have access to this abundance. There is going to be an advocate, or a source, what we often call the Spirit, that's gonna be with us. But the way, or the connection to this source, it's not spatial. It's not a set of coordinates. It's a channeling of abundance; it's living like we lived when Jesus lived and loved among us: we know the names of our neighbors because we seek to know them, to know what's written on their hearts, and share the most vulnerable and tender pieces of our lives; we share our tables and our homes, because we know that our bread and blessings are not diminished but multiplied

when broken and shared; we know and we share the stories of light, ancient and new alike, that temper darkness and quicken dawn. We know the way, y'all. And Jesus tells us that what we know is real, and worthy, and credentialed.

So...having been made aware of God's abundance, our access through the Spirit to that abundance, and of our track-record in taking part in that abundance, Jesus drops the biggest revelation of them all:

Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

Did you catch that, Millbrook? We're gonna build upon, even improve upon the very legacy that undergirds our faith. Our work is gonna be pretty great, too.

Of course, I'm not sure we should be too surprised. When Jesus first feeds the multitudes, he tells the disciples, "You feed them." Philip, just like all of us, will say it's impossible, because, man, we don't have the wages to make that happen! And yet Acts tells us that the neophytes who were flummoxed at the idea of procuring bread in the wilderness were the very same ones who created a community where all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.

So here's another Easter revelation. Jesus tells us we're gonna do great things, Millbrook. Jesus says, "You feed them, Millbrook. You house them, Millbrook. You heal them Millbrook. You channel a community in abundance, because, I promise, you know the way. You do!"

What's to say our gospel can't contain the creation of a home for 1,258 souls, and a table long enough for 33,500 children to fill their bellies? What wilderness is too remote to receive the signal of our collective empathy, hospitality, and generosity? What resources are beyond our reach, especially considering we've got a whole lot more than two sleeves of saltines and can of sardines? Jesus says, "If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

Make us a people, O God, of the Abundant Way. Help us to write an even greater story. Help us to be the neighbors our neighbors need us to be."

May it be so, and may it be soon. Amen.