

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Homily: Fr. Shijo George

Pastor – Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Victoria, BC, Canada

Today's Word of God gives us both comfort and a clear calling.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks tenderly to troubled hearts: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” In the Second Reading, through Saint Peter the Apostle, we hear a powerful image: “Come to Him, a living stone... and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house.” These two messages come together beautifully: Jesus prepares a place for us, but at the same time, He is already building us into something holy.

We all experience moments when our hearts are troubled - uncertainty, fear, disappointment, and even a kind of inner emptiness. The world offers many distractions, but often they leave us restless. That is why Jesus says: “Believe in God, believe also in me.” Faith is not just an idea: it is a relationship. When we trust Jesus, our hearts slowly find peace. As Augustine of Hippo reminds us: “Our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

Saint Peter gives us a striking image: Jesus is the living stone, and we are living stones being built into a spiritual house. This means that our spiritual life is not something accidental; it is something constructed, formed, and strengthened day by day. But a stone cannot build itself - we must come to Christ. Every time we pray, every time we forgive, and every time we choose love over anger, we allow God to shape us. As Francis of Assisi showed us: spiritual life is not about greatness in the eyes of the world, but about becoming an instrument in God's hands.

At the heart of the Gospel is that powerful declaration: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” Not just a way, but THE WAY. He is the Way, showing us how to live with love and forgiveness. He is the truth; revealing God to us. He is the life; giving



us purpose and hope. In a world full of confusion, this becomes our anchor. As Pope John Paul II said: Christ is not only the one who teaches the truth - He is the answer to our deepest questions.

Saint Peter reminds us of our identity: “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.” We are not just individuals trying to get through life; we are God’s chosen people, called to reflect His Light. Our spiritual life is not meant to be hidden; it is meant to shine. As Thérèse of Lisieux teaches us through her *Little Way*, even the smallest acts done with love become great in God’s eyes.

Finally, Jesus gives us hope: “I go to prepare a place for you.” This world is not our final home. We live here, we serve, we love, but we do not belong here forever. Our true home is with God. As Pope Benedict XVI reminds us: Christian hope means living already in the light of eternity.

So today, let us ask ourselves: Are we building our lives on Christ? Are we allowing Him to shape our hearts? Are we truly walking in Him as the way, the truth, and the life?

Let us not allow our hearts to remain troubled. Instead, place our trust in Him. For the One who calls us, is also the One who prepares a place for us.