

**Jubilate (The Fourth Sunday of Easter)**  
**26 April 2026**  
**John 16:16-22 (Isaiah 40:25-31; 1 Peter 2:11-20)**

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—Amen

The text for this morning's sermon is the Holy Gospel appointed for today from the Holy Gospel According to St. John, the sixteenth chapter.

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit—Amen

Alleluia! Christ is risen! (He is risen indeed, Alleluia!)

Our Lord Jesus speaks these words to His apostles on Thursday evening of Holy Week, just before He is betrayed. In our Lord's discourse that evening—which St. John records for us in chapters 13-16—Jesus is preparing His apostles for what is coming in the next few days. But He is also preparing them for the next steps, for their carrying out of His ministry after His ascension. The “little while” of which Jesus speaks is clearly His three-day rest in the tomb. But, for centuries, the church has read these words on this day, recognizing that we also live in “a little while.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross, was buried, and rose again. For forty days, He appeared and preached and taught. He baffled the authorities and filled the disciples with courage. But this period of mentoring is drawing to a close. The Lord will soon ascend to the Father, and “in a little while,” the Church will not see Him.

At least not in the same way.

He will no longer walk and talk and eat with the disciples. When they want to speak to Him, they will pray. When they want to hear His Word, they will read the scriptures in the assembly. When they want to hear His forgiveness, they will declare it in His name. And when they wish to experience Him in the flesh, it will be through the Lord's Supper.

And after a “little while,” says our Lord, we will see Him again. He will return to turn our sorrow into joy—the sorrow of the fallenness of this world will be changed into the joy of a new heaven and a new earth.

We wait for Him to return, dear friends, even as the angels told the disciples as they watched Him ascend into the heavens that He would indeed return. And this return, dear friends, is when we will see Him again, and when our “hearts will rejoice.” It will be a “little while.” Indeed, a “little while longer.”

But how impatient we are! Instead of keeping our eyes on the prize of the promise, we wallow in self-pity and complaint of the cross. We watch the world rejoice at our pain, our misery, our abuse—and we are indeed sorrowful. We are often defeated in this hateful culture—by people who lie about us, lie about our faith, lie about our Savior, by people in power who abuse that authority given them from above, using that power to coerce, to torture, to curtail the liberties of our brothers and sisters around the world, and even here in our own country.

We are watching the world decay into not merely madness, but into a seething rage, a scapegoating of our people in ways not seen since the days of the maniacal emperors of Rome.

In our Epistle, St. Peter bids us to endure the deprivations placed upon us by emperors and Supreme Courts. And when we are treated unjustly and yet endure the sorrows, “this is a gracious thing.” Our forbearance in this fallen and violent world is a confession of faith—faith in something better to come. We don’t have to overthrow the empire, because Jesus did that very thing, bringing the emperor Constantine to the faith without firing a single arrow, without rising up in mutiny, without living by the sword, which certainly means to die by the sword.

Our suffering is not a small thing, nor is our suffering in vain. “So also,” says our Lord, “you have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no-one will take

your joy away from you”—no one, dear friends, not a mentally unstable emperor, not a crooked court, not a culture of death, not swarms of people filled with hatred and rage, not Communists, not Nazis, not secularists, not even our own sinful flesh—will take our joy from us.

The Lord compares this “little while” of weeping and lamenting to the “anguish” of giving birth. Labor pains and birth pangs are excruciating, but when they are over, they are over. And instead of haunting memories of agony, there is rather “joy that a human being has been born into this world.”

Our Lord teaches us that our burdens and crosses which plague us, which beat us down, which wear us out in body and in mind, the things which vex us, perplex us, anger us, hurt us, and seem to have no end—will indeed one great day come to a screeching halt, never to be repeated again.

We live for this great day, dear friends! And it is the promise of this New Day which empowers us to survive and to endure the present days of suffering and strife, the time of the cross. For we know that after Good Friday comes Easter. And we know that the Lord goes away for a “little while,” and we know that we will see Him again.

We know that “He does not faint or grow weary; His understanding is unsearchable.” But what’s more, “He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might, he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

So, dear friends, let us not be puzzled like the disciples were, wanting to ask Him but perhaps afraid. Let us pray fervently for His return, for our suffering to end, for the birth pangs of the fallen world to be replaced by a new and greater world, and above all, let us rejoice that a

human being has been born into the world, a unique Human Being who is truly human, bearing completely the image and likeness of God, for He is God, even Jesus Christ our Lord, the man of sorrows whose suffering won true joy for us.

Let us yearn for that great and wondrous day when He will see us again, and our hearts will rejoice, and no one will take our joy from us!

And in the meantime, we live in that joy already because in a little while, you will see Him for you are forgiven for all your sins.

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit—Amen

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus—  
Amen

Sermon based on one by the Rev. Larry Beane