

## Easter 5A

*With councillors coming round to our doors before the local elections many people, including myself have used the occasion to complain about the planters on Sackville road. Basically people don't like the road being blocked when it's for no apparent good reason.*

No one could block or stop Jesus going where he pleased. Jesus and his followers were always on the move. Many of his stories in the gospel are *Journey stories*. The Good Samaritan was on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho when he helped an injured man, two Sundays ago the bewildered disciples were on their way to Emmaus, when Jesus joined them on the road. Paul was converted whilst on the road to Damascus. Jesus, Himself was forever going back and forth to Galilee. Today he's talking about going to His fathers' house to prepare a place for us.

Having a place prepared for us in heaven is one thing but travelling along the right road with no obstacles in the way, is another. The very early Christians were known as "followers of the Way". If we 'set ourselves close to Him' as Peter asks us to do in the second reading, we're not likely to be lead astray en route to our Father's house.

This same reading also says that Jesus was 'rejected by men but chosen by God'. So following the narrow way to my Father's house will not shield us from rejection of one kind or another. I may sometimes have to walk alone - shunned even by family and friends. The football supporters chant, '*you'll never walk alone*' does not always ring true for the committed Christian.

John the Baptist's clarion call was "prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight". So the way to God's Kingdom may be narrow but it's also straight. It is us who put obstacles in the way. We can deviate from the 'straight and narrow' and get lost. But Jesus

came to "seek out and save those who are lost". When we get lost He often sends angels in disguise to help us find our way again.

*Some years ago I remember coming back from Ireland late one foggy night in December when my battered old car went on fire whilst driving on a narrow road in central Wales with no lights or signs anywhere. I had taken a wrong turning and lost my way. It was a scary experience. There were no smart phones around then. Seeing a light in the distance I walked across fields in the dark, knocked on the door and after some initial hesitancy, the people turned out to be ever so helpful. After some food, they drove me to the nearest railway station some 10 miles away and even offered to scrap my smouldering car. They couldn't do enough.*

Have we ever come across anyone who had lost their way in life whom we've helped to return to the straight and narrow or have we put more obstacles in their way?

Jesus is the Way, the truth and the life. If we stay close to Him, a straight, well-signed way opens up before us. Our final destination may be some distance away but we'll have no fear of arriving at the wrong terminus.