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All one family

When Jesus told his disciples, not long before his death, that he was going ahead to prepare a place for them in his Father's house the idea must have seemed almost impossible. However, Jesus insisted that he would come and take them to the place he was preparing for them. Thomas asked how they could know the way and Jesus told him that he was the way, the truth and the life. Through believing in him they would come to God - as Father. This was a new understanding of God for the disciples and one that even today is a particularly Christian understanding of our relationship with God. Through belief in Jesus as the Son of God we can know God as Father.

Sometimes our identity seems to change dramatically. A relationship may end, a particular job or role may finish, we may move to a new area – any of these things can make us reconsider who we are since to a certain extent we are all defined by what we do, or don't do, and the people we relate to. For Jesus' disciples his imminent death posed a problem beyond their personal grief. They had grown up in the Jewish faith and left everything to follow Jesus. What were they to do after his death? Jesus reassured them that they would remain part of the family of which God is Father. Their identity in God would not change, whatever else might happen to them. The key understanding in Christianity is that we can all know God as a loving Father; whatever else may happen we remain members of God's family.

If that sounds attractive and you don't already belong to a church, you might like to visit one in these joyous weeks after Easter and meet the rest of the family – they'll be pleased to see you.