

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



The Advocate

Heavenly Father,
Sanctify our hearts with the gift of
your Spirit.
Empower us to continue the ministry
of Jesus—
to speak the truth with joy and gentleness,
to comfort others in their sorrow
and suffering,
to withstand evil in all its forms.

Reveal your Son's enduring presence within
and around us.
Help us reveal him to others in all that we do
so that your love may be known
and embraced by everyone
and the world brought to new life
in your Spirit.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, May 17, 2020

For the Family



Today's Readings: Acts 8:5–8, 14–17; Psalm 66:1–3, 4–5, 6–7, 16, 20; 1 Peter 3:15–18; John 14:15–21. In John's account of the Gospel, Jesus refers to multiple commandments, but he gives only one: love one another. To love people—and we would add, to cherish all of God's creation—is to love the Risen Lord and, through him, the Father. That love first flowed the other way, from the Father, through the Son, to the world. Love for and from God pulls the world back together. The Advocate, God's own Spirit, unites people and assures them that they are and always will be God's children.

The Advocate also empowers believers to act as Jesus did. Philip fulfills this commissioning perfectly: he pro-

claims Christ, expels demons, and heals people. Then, when the Samaritans accept the Gospel, centuries of enmity are overcome as Jews and Samaritans are bound together by Baptism and the Holy Spirit. They become sisters and brothers of Christ and part of the new family of God, the Father.

Our Second Reading urges us to act as Christ did, both for our sake and for the sake of others. People will not always be as receptive to us as the Samaritans were to Philip. Only by responding intelligently but peaceably will we persuade people of the enduring joy that comes from following Christ. By speaking and acting with gentle and patient persistence, we will be brought to life in the Spirit.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, May 18

Journeys

The Advocate that Jesus promised has unmistakably filled St. Paul. For the rest of the Easter season we will hear about Paul's extensive travels and missionary work. Paul takes every opportunity to tell others about Christ and to enter into fellowship with them. Make a map of your Christian journey. What significant moments are on that map? *Today's Readings: Acts 16:11–15; Psalm 149:1b–2, 3–4, 5–6a and 9b; John 15:26–16:4a.*

Tuesday, May 19

Revealing Righteousness

Jesus promises to send an Advocate who will reveal whether a person is ultimately righteous or sinful. In Acts, the jailer recognizes that Paul and Silas are righteous despite their imprisonment. The jailer is so impressed by their behavior that he listens to them and is baptized. Are there people you don't listen to because you are certain they are wrong? Do they have some words of truth to offer you? *Today's Readings: Acts 16:22–34; Psalm 138:1–2ab, 2cde–3, 7c–8; John 16:5–11.*

Wednesday, May 20

A Gospel for All

Jesus helps his disciples prepare for his death. He also promises that the "Spirit of truth" will give them insight into future events so that they can act in his name. This Spirit is active in Paul as he preaches in Athens, a city renowned for its diversity. Paul's ministry in that city anticipates the spread of the Gospel to the wider and still more diverse world. Today, the Gospel is lived and expressed in countless ways. What are some Catholic practices unique to your area or culture? *Today's Readings: Acts 17:15, 22–18:1; Psalm 148:1–2, 11–12, 13, 14; John 16:12–15.*

Thursday, May 21

The Ascension of the Lord

In ancient texts, revered people were sometimes shown being taken up into heaven. Their ascension was a metaphor for divine approval. Luke draws on this imagery to show that God approves of Jesus but also that Jesus shares God's power. Having ascended, Jesus is no longer physically constrained but is spiritually and sacramentally present in those who are baptized. *Today's Readings: Acts 1:1–11; Psalm 47:2–3, 6–7, 8–9; Ephesians 1:17–23; Matthew 28:16–20.*

Thursday of the Sixth Week of Easter

In Acts, we're reminded that Paul did not work alone but counted on other people for material and emotional support. When the disciples learned of Jesus' forthcoming death, they also would have turned to one another for support. Who is a source of strength and comfort for you? *Today's Readings: Acts 18:1–8; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; John 16:16–20.*

Friday, May 22

Everlasting Joy

Jesus insists that his disciples will soon be filled with a joy from God that no one can take away. This promise seems to clash with the passage from Acts where Paul is unjustly treated by a mob and those in authority don't care. Paul, however, compelled by love and gratitude for Christ, continues his ministry. *Today's Readings: Acts 18:9–18; Psalm 47:2–3, 4–5, 6–7; John 16:20–23.*

Saturday, May 23

Our Every Need

Jesus tells his disciples that soon God will give them whatever they ask. Often, however, we receive without asking. Apollos receives much needed instruction about the Christian faith. The Christian community then receives in Apollos a well-formed and compelling preacher. Surprise someone by doing something helpful but unexpected for them today. *Today's Readings: Acts 18:23–28; Psalm 47:2–3, 8–9, 10; John 16:23b–28.*

