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Monday, May 1, 2017
(Lec. 273)

- 1) Acts 6:8-15
- 2) John 6:22-29

Or for Memorial (Lec. 559)

- 1) Genesis 1:26—2:3
or Colossians 3:14-15, 17, 23-24
- 2) Matthew 13:54-58

MONDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Joseph
the Worker)

FOCUS: If we are open to it, the Holy Spirit can empower us as he empowered Saint Stephen.

Saint Stephen, strengthened by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit working in his life, was enabled to stand steadfast in faith when others leveled false accusations against him. Likewise, the Holy Spirit can sustain us in our day-to-day trials and temptations. But we must be open to the workings of the Spirit in daily prayer, at Mass and in the daily activities of life.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of Saint Stephen being arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin, where false charges were levied against him because of his powerful proclamation of the Gospel. In the Gospel, Jesus instructs a gathered crowd, *Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, let us now offer our prayers to our loving God for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may our faith be strong and steadfast like Saint Stephen, and may we continue to spread the Gospel to those who have not heard, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For lawmakers, policymakers and all those who govern, may they have a renewed respect for human life from conception through natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are persecuted for their faith, may the Spirit guide them and strengthen their resolve, and may they be *filled with grace* like Saint Stephen in order to persevere through difficult times, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this parish community, may we stand as true witnesses of the Gospel through our words and actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they come to join all the angels and saints in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: O God of mercy, who hears the cry of the poor and delivers them, hear and answer our prayers which we offer you through Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday, May 2, 2017
(Lec. 274)

- 1) Acts 7:51–8:1a
- 2) John 6:30-35

TUESDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER
(OBL MEM
Saint Athanasius,
Bishop and Doctor of the Church)

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit is at work within us, leading us to faith and love.

We do not always clearly hear or pay attention to the movement of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. The Holy Spirit joins us to Jesus Christ – the one whose life, death and resurrection opened the way for our eternal salvation. Faith in the steadfastness of God and in the love of Christ are signs of the Spirit working within us.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In our first reading today, Stephen is confronting the elders and the scribes for their opposition to the work of the Holy Spirit, and for not believing in Jesus. He is stoned to death for his witness to the truth. In our Gospel passage from John, the crowd desires a sign from Jesus so they might believe in him, and Jesus tells them that he is the sign they seek.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, let us offer our petitions to our heavenly Father.

- 1) For all who teach, work and minister in the Catholic Church, may the Spirit's guidance manifest itself in their powerful witness to the Good News, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all those in positions of authority, may they turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance and wisdom so as to serve the good of all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who live with chronic illness and for their family members, may they receive the help and support needed to begin their journey toward recovery and restoring balance in their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all the members of this parish community, may we recognize more fully our need to be guided and led by the Holy Spirit so we can discern God's will for our lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they rest in peace in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of mercy and love, hear and answer our prayers. Through Christ our Lord.

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Wednesday, May 3, 2017
(Lec. 561)

- 1) 1 Corinthians 15:1-8
- 2) John 14:6-14

**SAINTS PHILIP AND JAMES,
APOSTLES
- FEAST**

FOCUS: Jesus invites each of us to come and follow him.

Today the Church honors the Apostles Saint Philip and Saint James who, like the rest of the Apostles, were ordinary men who had the courage to answer Jesus' call to come follow him. As they followed the Lord Jesus, their lives were transformed so that after his resurrection and ascension they were prepared to shepherd the Church and lead lives of exemplary holiness.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul reminds the members of the Church of Corinth to be faithful to the Gospel, for it is through being faithful to the Gospel that one is saved. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of his unity with the Father and his return to the Father. Jesus says that whoever believes in him will do the works he does.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us now offer our prayers to God, who loves us unconditionally and blesses us abundantly.

- 1) For all who preach and teach the Gospel like the Apostles Philip and James, may their work bear good fruit in bringing many to believe and be saved, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those working for justice throughout the world, may their efforts serve to further the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the homeless, may they find shelter through the assistance of compassionate people, and may they be comforted by the love of the Father, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For catechists in our parish, may they continue to be blessed with the grace and strength needed to pass along the faith to our young people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all the faithful departed, may they come to know God's loving embrace for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, we ask you to hear and answer our prayers in accordance with your will. For we offer them to you through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Thursday, May 4, 2017
(Lec. 276)

- 1) Acts 8:26-40
- 2) John 6:44-51

THURSDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Jesus nourishes and strengthens through both word and sacrament.

As our Easter journey continues, we are reminded that heeding the word of God and living as Jesus taught us will bring us great joy. That joy is renewed each time we receive the Eucharist – Jesus' gift of his body and blood for our salvation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of the missionary journey of Philip as he teaches a foreigner about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. He then baptizes him, so the man's feet may be firmly planted on the path to life. In the Gospel, Jesus boldly proclaims that he is the living bread that came down from heaven who will give his flesh for the life of the world.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With joyful and trusting hearts, we lift up our prayers to our heavenly Father.

- 1) That the leaders of our Church may spread the Good News of Jesus' resurrection to all people and nations so the kingdom of God may continue to be built up on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That those who serve in public office may seek to create a society that considers the needs of all, especially those most vulnerable – the unborn and the sick, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That Christians throughout the world who are persecuted for their faith may be given the grace and strength to remain steadfast and resolute, and persevere in spite of their hardship, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the flame of faith will continue to burn brightly in the hearts of all the newly baptized members of our faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That all who have died may come to share the fullness of life and love in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of life, you nourish and sustain us with food from heaven. Hear and answer our prayers which we offer you through Christ our Lord.

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Friday, May 5, 2017
(Lec. 277)

- 1) Acts 9:1-20
- 2) John 6:52-59

FRIDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: *Jesus can work in and through us to accomplish wonders and marvels if our hearts are open.*

Saint Paul, prior to his conversion, was a persecutor of Christians. However, after his encounter with the Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus, his life was completely transformed, and he became an Apostle charged with the task of preaching to the Gentiles. Similarly, the more we are open to Jesus, the more he can work in and through us to accomplish wonders and marvels.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, we hear the story of the conversion of Saint Paul. While he was still persecuting the Christians, Jesus revealed himself to Saul and led him to be instructed in the faith by Ananias, a Christian leader. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the Jews that whoever eats his flesh and drinks his blood remains in him, and he in them.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that God can work in and through us if we cooperate with his grace, let us offer him our prayers and petitions.

- 1) For the pope, bishops, priests, and all religious, may their example of living out the Gospel message draw others to belief in Jesus Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who serve others through elected office, may they work to uphold the dignity and sanctity of life from conception through natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who persecute Christians, may they encounter the truth of Jesus Christ, and live in the light of God's love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all catechists and missionaries, may they demonstrate the great hope and joy of the Resurrection to those they teach by sharing the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they be welcomed into eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, as we prepare to receive Christ's most precious body and blood, we ask you to hear and answer our prayers that we offer through Christ our Lord.

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Saturday, May 6, 2017
(Lec. 278)

- 1) Acts 9:31-42
- 2) John 6:60-69

SATURDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Jesus speaks the words of the Spirit and life.

Following Jesus isn't easy. Even those who walked with him had a difficult time accepting his teachings. The disciples in today's Gospel who stayed with Jesus offer us an example to follow when we find ourselves struggling with his message. They say to Jesus: *You have the words of eternal life.*

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Acts tells of Peter on one of his missionary journeys stopping in the towns of Lydda and Joppa, where he worked miracles and wonders in the name of Jesus. The Gospel begins at the point just after Jesus explains that he is the bread of life. Some disciples find this teaching difficult and leave. Those who profess he is the *Holy One of God* remain with him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God's mercy and that Jesus' words are Spirit and life, let us join in offering our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For the Church throughout the world, that fear of the Lord and the consolation of the Holy Spirit may help us to grow ever stronger in faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, that their words and actions may help to end divisions and lead us closer to peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who struggle with Jesus' teachings, that through prayer their hearts may be transformed to accept that he is the way, the truth and the life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in our parish who were received into the Church at the Easter Vigil, may the joy they experienced upon entering the Church sustain them each day and remain with them forever, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our faithful departed, that the Lord may mercifully grant them entrance into eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, your words are Spirit and life. Hear the prayers of your people and fulfill them according to your will. We ask this through your son, Jesus.

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SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2017

(Lec. 49)

- 1) Acts 2:14a, 36-41
- 2) 1 Peter 2:20b-25
- 3) John 10:1-10

**FOURTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

FOCUS: Christ is the very center of our faith. He is our shepherd and we listen to his voice; through him we enter into fullness of life.

We who belong to Jesus by virtue of our baptism now share in his mission of redemption. How we prepare for this task is important. We need to strive for repentance, lead lives of prayer and patient endurance, and desire to listen attentively to his voice.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Acts tells of Peter, empowered by the Holy Spirit, boldly proclaiming the risen Christ and calling all to repentance and baptism. The second reading exhorts the early Christians to imitate Christ: they are to be patient as Christ was patient in the face of his suffering. Our Gospel reminds us that we are to follow Christ as the sheep follow the shepherd: for as the shepherd cares for his sheep, so Christ cares for each of us.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence and trust in the risen Christ, let us join in offering our prayers for our needs and those of the world to the Father.

- 1) For the Church, that as the body of Christ on earth we may faithfully and boldly proclaim the truth of the resurrection, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders, may they seek wisdom and guidance from the Holy Spirit as they work to solve the problems that plague our world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the sick and the dying, that the knowledge of the Resurrection may give them strength and hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all in our parish who have been washed clean in the waters of baptism, may their lives be changed by the power of the risen Christ, and may they be open to the fullness of his life, let us pray to the Lord
- 5) For those who have died marked with the sign of faith, may they come to share eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and eternal God, your son, Jesus Christ, has won victory over sin and death and made us your beloved sons and daughters. As we celebrate his victory, we ask you to hear our prayers and draw us ever closer to you. We ask this through Christ, our risen Lord.

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Monday, May 8, 2017
(Lec. 279)

- 1) Acts 11:1-18
- 2) John 10:11-18 (second option)

MONDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: God lovingly reaches out to all his people – Jews and Gentiles alike – with the good news of salvation.

In the first reading, Peter relates to the other Apostles how he experienced the Holy Spirit coming upon the Gentiles in the same way it had come upon them at Pentecost. This brought the Apostles to rejoice as they came to understand that salvation was a gift that God offers to all people who believe in Jesus. Let us not take this gift of faith or salvation for granted.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Acts, we hear how God grants *life-giving repentance* and salvation to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. In the Gospel, Jesus tells his followers that he is the Good Shepherd who *lays down his life for the sheep*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Father of all creation, we now offer our petitions to you with prayerful hearts and confidence that you will hear them.

- 1) For all who shepherd the Church, may they continue to do so with courage and humility, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may they turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance as they work to foster peace and unity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the unemployed and underemployed, may they be blessed in finding work that allows them to provide for themselves and their families, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, may the prayers and works of service we engage in make us stronger in faith and more committed to be witnesses of God's mercy in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy eternal peace in the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers according to your heavenly will. For we offer them to you through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday, May 9, 2017
(Lec. 280)

- 1) Acts 11:19-26
- 2) John 10:22-30

TUESDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: *My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me.*

The words spoken by Jesus in the Gospel, *My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me*, offer a clear reminder that to live as a follower of Jesus, we must listen to his voice. Doing this isn't hard as Jesus speaks to us in many and varied ways, such as through his teachings recounted in sacred Scripture, and the still small voice that speaks in the silence of our hearts.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Acts tells of the continued growth of the early Church, and how for the first time those who believed in Jesus were called Christians. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that he and the Father are one.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Together as brothers and sisters in Christ, let us now offer our prayers for our needs and those of the world to our heavenly Father.

- 1) For Pope Francis, our bishop, N., and for all priests and deacons, that through their faithful ministry we may all be guided to help build the kingdom of heaven on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may they seek to enact policies in their nations that offer opportunities for all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For married couples, that the unity of their marital bond remain strong and rooted in Christian faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For families in our parish, may they actively participate in the Church's mission of sharing the Good News with those they encounter each day, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all the faithful departed, may they join the angels and saints in singing God's praises for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty Father, hear and answer our prayers which we offer you with humility and gratitude. Through Christ our Lord.

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Wednesday, May 10, 2017
(Lec. 281)

- 1) Acts 12:24–13:5a
- 2) John 12:44-50

WEDNESDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Damien de Veuster,
Priest)

FOCUS: Jesus tells us: *Whoever believes in me believes not only in me but also in the one who sent me.*

The words of Jesus are the words of the Father. We are called to listen to him, be enlightened by his words, put them into practice and boldly proclaim them to others. When we believe in Jesus, we are united with the Father.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts, we hear how the word of God spreads through the preaching of the Apostles, especially Barnabas and Saul. They were supported by the prayers of the Church and prompted by the Holy Spirit to go forth to other lands. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of the unity he shares with his Father.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: God, our Creator, with trust in your compassion and mercy, we present our needs and petitions to you.

- 1) For missionaries and catechists in our Church, may they continue to be emboldened by the Holy Spirit as they teach the word of God and spread the Good News, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For relief workers and refugees in war-torn areas of the world, may they be blessed in their work to bring comfort and order to those whose lives have been uprooted, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who serve in the military overseas, may they be strengthened to carry out their mission and be protected from harm, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all those confirmed at Easter, may they be open and receptive to the Holy Spirit so they may continue to grow in holiness, and so the gifts of the Holy Spirit may be more fully manifest in their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they find eternal peace with our heavenly Father, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, giver of every good and perfect gift, hear and answer our prayers according to your most holy will. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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Thursday, May 11, 2017
(Lec. 282)

- 1) Acts 13:13-25
- 2) John 13:16-20

THURSDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: By praying daily and opening our hearts to Jesus, we come to be raised up to a newer and fuller life in him.

As each day of the Easter season unfolds, we have the opportunity to more fully grasp the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus. We need this holy season in order to ponder this great mystery and experience its power more fully in our lives. One of the ways we do this is by opening our hearts to Jesus so he may raise us up to a newer and fuller life in him.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In our first reading, Saint Paul is preaching to fellow Jews and Gentiles. He refers to Jesus as a descendant of David when he says that God sent a Savior *according to his promise*. In the Gospel passage, Jesus explains that the act of foot-washing is an example of humble service to one another.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us collect our prayers for the needs of our brothers and sisters, and present them to our loving God.

- 1) For Pope Francis, bishops, priests and deacons, may they continue to serve as examples of humble servitude and self-giving love to all the faithful, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of nations, may their hearts be softened by God's grace to enact laws to protect the dignity and sanctity of life at all stages, from conception through natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For families divided by tragedy, war or human weakness, may God's love restore them to harmony and unity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who are sick, may they find comfort and solace during their illness through the care of our faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy perfect happiness and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers according to your will. For we offer them to you through Christ our Lord.

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Friday, May 12, 2017
(Lec. 283)

- 1) Acts 13:26-33
- 2) John 14:1-6

FRIDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saints Nereus and Achilleus
Martyrs;
Saint Pancras,
Martyr)

FOCUS: Living as a follower of Jesus requires more than mere belief.

From our stance two thousand years after the fact, it's easy to see what the religious leaders of Jesus' day miss: that he is the Messiah and Savior of the world. And although we profess belief in Jesus as the Son of God and Savior of the world, do we truly trust in him, and are we able to recognize him working in our daily lives?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts, Paul proclaims Jesus as the Messiah, foretold in the Scriptures and the fulfillment of God's promises made through the prophets. In the Gospel, Jesus urges his disciples to have faith in him, as they do in God, and to recognize him as the way, the truth and the life.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As followers of Jesus – the way, the truth and the life – we present the needs of the world to our heavenly Father.

- 1) For the faithful, may our hearts be ever-open to the Holy Spirit so we may continue to grow in faith and in our ability to give effective witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who work in the health care professions around the world, may they be inspired by the example of Jesus to lovingly care for and work to bring healing to those who are sick and suffering, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are overwhelmed by burdens and hardship, may they find solace and peace in the sure knowledge that Jesus loves them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who were welcomed into the Church at the Easter Vigil, may they continue to grow in their love for Jesus, and may their commitment to discipleship be nurtured by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they will receive a place at the eternal banquet feast in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, in your goodness, hear and answer our prayers which we offer you through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Saturday, May 13, 2017
(Lec. 284)

- 1) Acts 13:44-52
- 2) John 14:7-14

SATURDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Our Lady of Fatima)

FOCUS: Do not underestimate Jesus when seeking and asking for his help.

Jesus told us to ask for anything in his name, and he will grant it. What have you asked for? Have you come to realize that the things you ask for must be consistent with the will of the Father?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today's first reading relates the success Paul and Barnabas experienced in converting the Gentiles of Antioch. The Jews, however, grew more bitter toward the disciples, prompting the two to leave for Iconium. In the Gospel, Jesus assures us that if we know him, we know the Father, and if we ask for anything in his name, he will respond.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us raise our voices to the Father and bring our petitions to him, praying for our own needs and those of the world.

- 1) That all members of the Church may follow the example of Paul and Barnabas, sharing the Good News with all those we encounter, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That on this feast of Our Lady of Fatima, we may come together and pray the rosary for world peace, as Our Lady requested, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who are struggling to make their way in a new country, or a new situation, may turn to God for help and find peace, welcome and a helping hand, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That each of us may strive to be attentive and responsive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit throughout the course of each day, so we may share Christ's love more fully, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may know the joy of life everlasting in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, hear the prayers we bring before you and grant what is consistent with your will. We ask these, and all things, through Christ our Lord.

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SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2017

(Lec. 52)

- 1) Acts 6:1-7
- 2) 1 Peter 2:4-9
- 3) John 14:1-12

**FIFTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

FOCUS: We are called to the difficult work of discipleship, to be both hearers and doers of the word.

In and through our baptism, we were given new life in Christ and became members of the Body of Christ – the Church. As such, each of us is called to holiness, and to use our unique gifts and talents to further the work and mission of the Church. We are also called to use these gifts to help build up God's kingdom on earth, and lead lives which give glory to God.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The reading from Acts tells of the Apostles ordaining seven men as deacons to help ensure the needs of those in the early Church were being served as the Church continued to grow and develop. The second reading uses Hebrew Scripture to illustrate that Christ is the foundation of the Church, and his followers are *living stones* – a holy people. In the Gospel, Jesus says that he is *the way and the truth and the life*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Father of mercy and love, we present our needs and petitions to you.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may our lives of service and outreach proclaim to all that Jesus is Savior of the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who have accepted the responsibility of public service, may they seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to help them carry out their duties with wisdom and integrity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For children who live in poverty, may they be protected from harm and receive the assistance they need to develop their unique gifts and talents to their fullest potential, so they lead lives which make a difference in the world and give glory to God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those gathered here today and all members of our parish family, may we strive to live the call of discipleship by our outreach to those in need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and all who have died, may they see God face to face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father in heaven, hear these and all of our petitions, and look with mercy on your people who strive to follow you. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Monday, May 15, 2017
(Lec. 285)

- 1) Acts 14:5-18
- 2) John 14:21-26

MONDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Isidore)

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit guides us in the way of all truth.

After Jesus ascended into heaven, he did not leave the Apostles or the others who made up the early Church as orphans. Rather, he sent the Holy Spirit to safeguard and guide the Church in the way of all truth. Understanding this, may we turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance each day so we may keep our feet firmly planted on the path to life.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the Acts of the Apostles, Paul heals a man crippled from birth because of his strong faith. In the Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that the Father will send *the Advocate*, the Holy Spirit, to teach and remind them of everything Jesus taught and did.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With humble and grateful hearts, let us join in offering our prayers for our needs and those of the world to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For the Church, as the Body of Christ in the world, may all her members continue to grow in holiness and boldly proclaim Jesus as Lord to those who have yet to hear the Good News, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders throughout the world, may they work to find just and peaceful solutions to problems and disagreements that arise, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who serve in the military, both at home and abroad, may they be kept from harm as they carry out their duties, and receive the assistance and support they need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this parish community, may we continue to grow in our love for Jesus and recognize our mission to witness to the Gospel in our daily lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they find rest in God's eternal embrace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear our prayers and grant us the grace and strength needed to lead lives that are holy and pleasing to you. We ask this, and all things, through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday, May 16, 2017
(Lec. 286)

- 1) Acts 14:19-28
- 2) John 14:27-31a

TUESDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: The road to Paradise may be paved with some trials and hardships, but the final reward is beyond compare.

We learn that hard work is usually needed to finish anything worthwhile, but the effort is worth it. Before ascending into heaven, Jesus promises joyful eternity for those who take up their cross and follow him and persevere in faith.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the Acts of the Apostles, Saint Paul is stoned by some Jews, but survives. He and Barnabas visit cities, building the faith of the people and reminding them that hardships are a part of the Christian life. In the Gospel, Jesus prepares his disciples for his approaching return to the Father.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us join in offering our prayers and petitions to the Lord.

- 1) For Church leaders, may they continue to raise their voices on behalf of the most vulnerable of God's children, especially the unborn, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in public service, may they strive to make decisions with integrity and honesty that promote the good of all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are estranged from family members because of misunderstanding or lack of forgiveness, may God's grace help bring them to work toward healing and reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may we remember our Christian duty to care for the poor and generously assist them in their need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our departed friends and family members, may they enjoy eternal happiness with all the angels and saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) Special petition/s

PRIEST: Father, hear and answer our prayers which we offer to you with humble and grateful hearts. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, May 17, 2017
(Lec. 287)

- 1) Acts 15:1-6
- 2) John 15:1-8

WEDNESDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: When we stay focused on the Lord, we are able to work through the difficult questions of life.

Jesus, the true vine, is the foundation of our faith, and we are the branches. When we pray daily and reflect on his word, sacred Scripture, we are nourished and sustained. We will be judged according to the fruit we produce.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts, Paul and Barnabas travel to Jerusalem to meet with the Apostles and Church leaders regarding whether believers must be circumcised in order to be saved. An assembly is called to decide the question. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that he is the true vine and his Father is the vine grower.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With humility, we come before our merciful God and place our prayers before him.

- 1) That Pope Francis, bishops and priests will continue to turn to the Holy Spirit for the grace and wisdom needed to assist the faithful in living in greater love and unity with God and one another, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That people in every nation throughout the world will be blessed with leaders who work tirelessly for peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who are seeking employment may be blessed with the support they need to find work that provides for their needs and the needs of those who depend upon them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That members of our parish struggling with difficult decisions may turn to God in prayer, and seek the counsel of others, to be enabled to make choices in keeping with God's will, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died will come to enter into eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and gracious Father, we ask that you answer our prayers according to your will. For we offer them to you through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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Thursday, May 18, 2017
(Lec. 288)

- 1) Acts 15:7-21
- 2) John 15:9-11

THURSDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint John I,
Pope and Martyr)

FOCUS: We are called to share with others the love we have received from Jesus Christ.

In our parish communities, we can sometimes feel content that we have received the Gospel, or even become hostile to those on the outside. But the Gospel has been given to us that we might share it with everyone. The love which God pours into our hearts through Christ Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit is meant to permeate our lives and help lead others to Jesus.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In our first reading, the Apostles gather in Jerusalem to determine whether the Gentiles need to be circumcised in order to share in the blessings of the New Covenant and to live as faithful disciples of Jesus. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches the disciples that in order for them to remain constant in their faith and love for Jesus, they must keep his commandments.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we bring our needs before you with faith that our prayers will be heard.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we be inspired by the devotion of those within the early Church to fearlessly spread the word of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who are discerning a vocation to the priesthood or religious life, may they listen to the call of God and answer without fear or reservation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are ill, may their suffering be alleviated by caring professionals and the efforts of those who minister to them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish, may we strive to keep God's commandments so that we may *remain in his love*, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, may they come to enter into perpetual joy and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving Father, hear and answer our prayers and guide us in responding to your will for us. We pray through your son, Jesus Christ.

* * *

Friday, May 19, 2017
(Lec. 289)

- 1) Acts 15:22-31
- 2) John 15:12-17

FRIDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: *Love one another, as I love you.*

The Apostles were among the first to experience the great love of God through Jesus during his time on earth. Love was the main focus of Jesus' teachings, and it has been passed on through the Apostles and beyond. In loving each other, we share in God's great plan of salvation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the Apostles send representatives with a letter to assure the Gentile converts of their welcome into the Body of Christ. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches us to love one another, and says, *No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence in the love our heavenly Father has for us, we bring our prayers to him this day.

- 1) For missionaries who spread the good news of salvation to those who have not heard it, may they be blessed with the grace and strength to persevere, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For policymakers, may they have a greater respect for life at all stages, from conception through natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who have been harmed by violence in their lives, may they find strength and comfort in their faith in Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For catechists in our parish, may they be blessed in their ministry of passing along the faith to our young people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all the faithful departed, may they see the face of God in the glory of heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, in your goodness and mercy hear and answer our prayers according to your will. We offer them to you through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Saturday, May 20, 2017
(Lec. 290)

- 1) Acts 16:1-10
- 2) John 15:18-21

SATURDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Bernardine of Siena,
Priest)

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit gives us the grace, guidance and strength needed to persevere and endure all things.

The challenge for the early disciples, as well as for us, is to trust that the Lord is always with us and is aware that we may be rejected by the world and made to suffer because of our faith in him. Jesus provides us with the gift of the Holy Spirit that we may persevere and endure all things, remaining steadfast in our mission to bring his message to others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts, we trace Paul's journey to bring the message of Jesus to many in different towns. He follows the promptings of the Holy Spirit to travel to Macedonia. In the Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples, *I have chosen you out of the world*, and that they will face hardship because of him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in his love for us, let us join in offering our prayers and petitions to our Father in heaven.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may they be blessed with the strength to continue to spread the joy of the Gospel to those who have not heard, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of nations, may they practice compassion and fair judgment in all matters that come before them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who face the daily challenges of living with chronic illness, may they be blessed with caregivers who stand beside them and the peace of Jesus, the Divine Physician, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community, may our prayers today transform us and inspire us to lead lives of more faithful discipleship, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they experience the joys of the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, we thank you for hearing our prayers, and ask you to grant what we ask in faith. Through Christ our Lord.

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SUNDAY, MAY 21, 2017

(Lec. 55)

- 1) Acts 8:5-8, 14-17
- 2) 1 Peter 3:15-18
- 3) John 14:15-21

**SIXTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

FOCUS: Living as a disciple of Jesus requires that we be ever-ready and willing to share our faith with others.

The first reading reminds that as disciples of Jesus, we must be willing to share with others the reason for our hope. Meeting this challenge requires first and foremost that Jesus, in whom we are saved and redeemed, is the source of our hope. We also need to pray each day so that we have the grace and strength we need to share our faith when the opportunity presents itself.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Acts, we hear of the many people in Samaria who were accepting the word of God, and how Peter and John were sent to confirm them in the Holy Spirit. In the first Letter of Peter, we are encouraged to be ready to give an explanation for our hope. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that whoever has his commandments and observes them is the one who loves him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Striving to lead lives which give a faithful witness to the Gospel, let us join in offering our prayers for our needs and those of the world to the Father.

- 1) That all members of the Church may open themselves more fully to the Holy Spirit and be responsive to the Spirit's promptings, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That policymakers may have the courage to make wise choices for the benefit of all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who do not experience God's peace in their lives may seek true healing and renewal through the sacrament of reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That each of us may turn to God for healing and strength so we may get past hurts and foster reconciliation among families and friends, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died in the peace of Christ may enjoy eternal rest, let us pray to the Lord.

6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we place all our hope in you and ask that you hear and answer our prayers according to your will. For we offer them to you through Christ our Lord.

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Monday, May 22, 2017
(Lec. 291)

- 1) Acts 16:11-15
- 2) John 15:26–16:4a

MONDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Rita of Cascia,
Religious)

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit helps us to remain faithful to Christ when living out the Gospel is difficult.

The saints have shown us that the Holy Spirit has been their Advocate, and helped them be strong witnesses to the Gospel in difficult times. We can imitate their example of faithfulness to God amidst the trials of our daily lives if we rely upon the Holy Spirit.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading recounts how Saint Paul and his companions were traveling and spreading the word of God. One whom they baptized, Lydia, invited them to stay at her home. Jesus assures the Apostles in John's Gospel that the Holy Spirit will help them to stand firm in their faith when faced with persecution.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Our heavenly Father remains close to us at all times. Let us bring our petitions before him today, confident that he will provide for all our needs.

- 1) For the Church, that the Holy Spirit may continue to fill her with the grace needed to send forth faithful witnesses to the Gospel to all nations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of nations, may God strengthen their will to forge peace in place of conflict, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For people suffering from chronic illness, may they turn to their faith in Jesus, the Divine Physician, for healing and strength, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish, that God might empower us to be instruments of his compassion to those around us who face economic hardship, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that Christ might welcome them this day into the heavenly wedding banquet, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you with humility and gratitude through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday, May 23, 2017
(Lec. 292)

- 1) Acts 16:22-34
- 2) John 16:5-11

TUESDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit, the Advocate, will sustain us in our faith.

We all have people we rely on for support and encouragement during times of uncertainty. Fear may rise up within us if we consider life without these trusted companions. At these times, we can find comfort in the knowledge that we are never truly alone because we have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us meet the challenges of our lives.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the unshakeable faith of Paul and Silas in the face of persecution and imprisonment, as well as personal outreach, help lead their jailer and his whole family to baptism and a life of faith. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the disciples that even though he must leave them, he will send them an Advocate – the Holy Spirit – to comfort them and guide them to truth.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting and believing that the Holy Spirit guides us to all truth, we lift up our needs to the Father.

- 1) For the leaders of the Church, that through their example of steadfast faith and holiness, they may lead all believers to a deeper relationship with our Savior, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of war-torn nations, may they work to end divisions and foster reconciliation among their people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are imprisoned, may they discover in Jesus a sure companion for their lives who gives them the grace to change and grow amidst adversity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who grieve in our parish community, may they be comforted by our prayers and loving support, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they join all the angels and saints in singing God's praises for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, in your goodness and love, hear and answer our prayers which we offer you through Christ our Lord.

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Wednesday, May 24, 2017
(Lec. 293)

- 1) Acts 17:15, 22–18:1
- 2) John 16:12-15

WEDNESDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: We know the God of righteousness and truth whom we worship.

Saint Paul proclaims the Gospel message in today's reading in a way the people could understand. In the same way, we are called to give witness to our faith in our daily lives in ways that those around us can recognize, such as treating others the way we would like to be treated.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts, Paul travels to Athens where he gives his Gentile audience a history of God's revelation to humanity, including that Jesus rose from the dead. In the Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that he will send them the Holy Spirit to strengthen them and lead them to the truth.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us join in offering our prayers for our needs and those of the world to God the almighty Father.

- 1) For all those who lead our Church, may the Holy Spirit continue to guide them in the ways of understanding, wisdom and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all world leaders, may they work for policies that foster harmony between individuals and benefit the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those around the world who are being persecuted because of their religious beliefs, may they be given the grace and strength needed to persevere in their faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For each of us, may we seek to be more attentive and responsive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our lives so we may be an example of the love of Christ for others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, may they come to experience perfect happiness and peace in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Most merciful and loving God, hear and answer our prayers according to your most perfect and holy will. For we offer them to you through Christ our Lord.

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NOTE: Regarding the Ascension of the Lord, the ecclesiastical provinces of Boston, Hartford, New York, Newark, Omaha, and Philadelphia have retained its celebration on the proper Thursday, while all other provinces have transferred this Solemnity to the Seventh Sunday of Easter, May 28. If transferred, Thursday, May 25, is observed as an Easter Weekday or as one of the following Optional Memorials: Saint Bede the Venerable, Priest and Doctor of the Church, Saint Gregory VII, Pope, or Saint Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi, Virgin. The following readings are used: Acts 18:1-8/John 16:16-20(294)

Thursday, May 25, 2017

(Lec. 58)

- 1) Acts 1:1-11
- 2) Ephesians 1:17-23
- 3) Matthew 28:16-20

**THE ASCENSION
OF THE LORD
- SOLEMNITY**
(Holy Day of Obligation)

FOCUS: We are assured of the power of God in our lives – the same power that raised Christ from the dead.

Jesus did not leave us orphans after his ascension into heaven. He is with us always, leading and guiding us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus speaks to us directly in and through sacred Scripture, and works to strengthen and nourish us through the graces of the sacraments so we may grow in holiness.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of Jesus' final instructions to the Apostles before ascending into heaven. The second reading reminds us of the importance of praying – that we might grow in wisdom and understanding. In the Gospel, the risen Jesus commands the Apostles to go forth and make disciples of all peoples. Then he ascends into heaven to the right hand of the Father.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that Jesus is with us always by the power of the Holy Spirit, let us offer our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we have the courage and grace to spread the joy and hope of the Resurrection throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all government leaders, may their hearts be driven by fairness, and by compassion for the people they serve, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the unemployed, may they be blessed with the support and resources they need to find work that provides for their needs and the needs of their families, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of our parish, may we give generously of our time, treasure and talent to further the work and mission of the Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our deceased relatives and friends, and all the faithful departed, may they experience eternal peace and joy in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Merciful Father, we ask that you attend to the needs of your faithful, and hear the prayers we offer today. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

***Optional Commentary for May 25, 2017**

Thursday, May 25, 2017

(Lec. 294)

- 1) Acts 18:1-8
- 2) John 16:16-20

THURSDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK OF EASTER

FOCUS: We may be rejected by the world when we testify to the truth that Jesus is the Christ, but Jesus promises that our grief *will become joy*.

Paul himself was rejected by many, including many of his own people as he preached and proclaimed the Gospel. But that was not the end for Paul; he found strength and joy in Jesus to continue his mission and work. Similarly, if we place our faith and trust in Jesus, we can find strength and joy in him that enables us to persevere and give a faithful witness to the Gospel.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading from Acts, Paul first meets Priscilla and Aquila, fellow Jews and tentmakers, in Corinth where he begins preaching in the synagogue that Jesus is the Christ. Opposed and rejected, he turns his energy to the Gentiles. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches the disciples that they will weep and mourn while the world rejoices, but that their grief will be turned to joy.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that the Lord will not leave us orphans, we present the prayers of our hearts with confidence to our God.

- 1) For missionaries and those who preach the Good News throughout the world, that they may have the grace to persevere in the face of opposition and rejection, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of all nations, may they reject division, and instead work so that peace may reign more fully throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who grieve the loss of a loved one, may God's tender love heal their broken hearts and restore peace and gladness to their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this community of faith, may we continue to recognize God's love for each one of us, and actively share that love with others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead, and all who have died, may they sing the Lord's praises forever in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear and answer our prayers which we offer you today through Christ our Lord.

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Friday, May 26, 2017
(Lec. 295)

- 1) Acts 18:9-18
- 2) John 16:20-23

FRIDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(OBL MEM
Saint Philip Neri, Priest)

FOCUS: We will rejoice in the Lord's presence.

As we encounter obstacles during life's journey, we are able to find strength in our Lord's presence, as did Saint Philip Neri, whose feast we celebrate today. With the Spirit burning in his heart, he used friendliness and humor to re-evangelize many who had fallen away from the Church in the sixteenth century.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Acts, the Lord tells Paul to continue his mission with assurance of his presence. He is brought before the tribunal, then released, and he continues preaching. In the Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples their pain will be turned to joy. He promises to see them again, and tells them they shall receive anything they ask the Father in his name.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting Jesus' promise that God hears and answers all our prayers, let us humbly turn to God, offering him our petitions.

- 1) For Pope Francis, our bishops and priests, that they may continue to proclaim the mercy of God in a way that reaches the hearts and minds of all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those entrusted with power in war-torn areas of the world, may they act with compassion and right judgment so that peace may reign in their lands, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the poor, the sick, and those experiencing sadness and worry, that they turn to God and his Church for help and know that Jesus never abandons his sheep, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, that we may take advantage of the sacrament of penance so we may be more fully reconciled to God and grow in holiness, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they enjoy perpetual light and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and eternal God, we have brought our petitions before you. Hear these prayers, which we offer through Christ our Lord.

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Saturday, May 27, 2017
(Lec. 296)

- 1) Acts 18:23-28
- 2) John 16:23b-28

SATURDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Augustine of Canterbury,
Bishop)

FOCUS: Jesus invites us into relationship with him and with the Father.

Today's Gospel reminds us of the truth that it is in and through Jesus that we come to know and encounter God the Father, who loves us and provides for us. Jesus tells his disciples that their joy may be complete if they but turn to him, and to the Father. We, too, must trust that God hears our prayers and will answer them according to his will.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Acts recounts how Paul, after staying in Antioch for some time, traveled throughout the Galatian country and Phrygia, helping to build up the Church. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of God the Father, and the Father's love for each of us.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Encouraged by the words of Jesus to ask the Father anything in his name, we turn to God with our prayers and petitions.

- 1) For Pope Francis, all bishops, priests, and deacons, that they may continue to challenge us and lead us to greater faith to become stronger witnesses to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who do not know the Lord, may they open their hearts to God's grace and place their faith in Jesus so they may be saved, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are on the fringes of society, especially the poor, that we may not be indifferent to their cries for help but reach out to them with God's love and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this community of believers, may we, through daily prayer and the study of our faith, continue to grow in our knowledge and love for the Lord so we may give a more faithful witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and all who have died, may they joyfully enter eternal life in the presence of the Father, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear and answer our prayers according to your will. For we offer them to you through your son, Jesus Christ.

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NOTE: In those places where the observance of the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord has been transferred to this day, the Mass and readings of the Ascension are used: Acts 1:1-11/Ephesians 1:17-23/Matthew 28:16-20(58)

SUNDAY, MAY 28, 2017

**SEVENTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

(Lec. 59)

- 1) Acts 1:12-14
- 2) 1 Peter 4:13-16
- 3) John 17:1-11a

FOCUS: Jesus' last thoughts and prayers are focused on his disciples as he prepares to face the cross.

In preparing his disciples for when he will no longer be with them, Jesus encourages them by prayer. This is his hour of glorification, but it is equally their hour too. While Jesus is ready to embrace the work of redemption, he knows his disciples will have their faith shaken. So his prayer reassures them that they will share his glory because they already belong to him by faith.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Acts recalls how after the Ascension, the disciples return to Jerusalem and gather together in continuous prayer as they await the coming of the Holy Spirit. The second reading reminds us that when we suffer, we share in the sufferings of Christ. In the Gospel, taken from the farewell discourse, Jesus prays for his disciples as the time for his glorification draws near.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Christ has given us his Spirit that we might continue his mission in the world. Let us turn to God now with humble hearts as we pray for our needs.

- 1) For the bishops of the Church, successors to the Apostles, may they always be united in faith as they lead Christ's holy people throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all Christians, may we, through the power of Christ's resurrection and ascension, rise above all that divides us and boldly proclaim him as sovereign Lord and Savior, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, may they find strength and consolation in joining their suffering to Christ's for the salvation of the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who entered the Church at Easter, may they heed the promptings of the Holy Spirit in their lives, and live each day as devoted disciples of Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died marked with the sign of faith, that just as Christ shared our mortal bodies they may come to share in his eternal glory, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and living God, who sent your Son to save and redeem us, hear and answer our prayers, both those spoken and those held within the silence of our hearts. We offer them to you through Christ our Lord.

Monday, May 29, 2017
(Lec. 297)

- 1) Acts 19:1-8
- 2) John 16:29-33

MONDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Salvation through Christ Jesus means God will never abandon us.

Today's readings give us strong reminders of the love of God for us through Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit, both in the words of the Savior himself and those of Saint Paul. Our world today is very different from the world of Saint Paul, but the message he carried is the same today: true salvation lies in God through Christ Jesus, and he will never abandon us.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today's first reading from the Acts of the Apostles recalls Paul baptizing people in the name of Jesus, and preaching and teaching about the kingdom of God with boldness and zeal. In the Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples to have courage because he has conquered the world.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Recognizing our own dependence on God, let us raise our hearts and voices in offering our petitions to our heavenly Father.

- 1) For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, and for bishops, priests and all religious, that their lives be a testament to the love of God for every living thing and an inspiration to all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For our elected leaders and all those who hold office, that they be guided by the Holy Spirit in the decisions they make each day, and that those decisions reflect dignity and mercy for all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the sick and the dying and their caregivers, that God's mercy continue to soothe and heal their bodies and spirits, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this assembly, may we, like Saint Paul, be filled with the Holy Spirit and go forth to share the Good News with others, let us pray to the Lord
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they rest in the peace of the risen Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we thank you for the power of the Holy Spirit that transforms our lives. We ask that you receive our prayers. Through Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday, May 30, 2017
(Lec. 298)

- 1) Acts 20:17-27
- 2) John 17:1-11a

TUESDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Jesus calls us to God's love, and to share the Gospel message with others.

Just as Jesus called the disciples, he calls us as well, to make God's love known to others and to share the Gospel message. Answering this call requires that we place our lives into God's hands each day so he can use us as instruments of his light, love and peace in the world. It also requires that we be willing to go where the Lord leads, and live according to his teachings.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Acts tells of Paul saying farewell to the members of the Church in Ephesus. In the Gospel from John, Jesus asks for the glory he had before the world began, so he can in turn give glory to his Father. He also prays for his disciples.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that God lovingly watches over us to protect us and provide for our needs, let us join in offering our prayers to the Lord.

- 1) For Pope Francis and all who shepherd our Church, may they always lead us in the ways of faith, hope and love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all public servants, may they strive to speak for those who elected them, and lead with integrity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the sick, may they be strengthened by the loving care and concern shown to them by God's faithful people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all of us gathered here, may our prayers today transform us as we work to help build up God's kingdom on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy perpetual joy and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear and answer our prayers according to your will. We ask this in the name of your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Wednesday, May 31, 2017
(Lec. 572)

**THE VISITATION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
- FEAST**

- 1) Zephaniah 3:14-18a
or Romans 12:9-16
- 2) Luke 1:39-56

FOCUS: *The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.*

Because of her humble and obedient heart, Mary is capable of giving God due praise for all he has done. We, too, must submit our thoughts to the will of the Father in order to recognize and acknowledge his many gifts (cf. CCC 2097).

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the prophet Zephaniah encourages the people of Israel to rejoice because the Lord is in their midst; the Lord had removed the judgment against them and sent a Savior to renew them in his love. In the Gospel, Mary rejoices in all the great things that God has done. Her canticle of praise acknowledges God's mercy and faithfulness, and the fulfillment of his promise to Abraham.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident that God is ever faithful, let us confidently approach the Father with our petitions.

- 1) That all members of the Church will live each day recognizing that God is in their midst, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That those who lead nations may hear the cries of the poor, lift up the lowly and fill the hungry with good things, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That all pregnant women at this beautiful time in their lives may be supported by our friendship and prayer, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we in this faith community may receive the sacraments of holy Eucharist and reconciliation with purposeful trust and confidence that these gifts from God are the source of our strength, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That our beloved dead, and those who will die alone today, may see God face-to-face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petitions)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, you sent your Only Begotten Son to dwell among us and to save us from our sins. Hear the prayers we offer you in obedient faith and grant them according to your will. We ask this through that same Jesus Christ our Lord.

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