

MAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12 13

14 15 16 17 18

19 20 21 22 23

24 25 26 27 28

29 30 30_{OPTIONAL} 31

Wednesday, May 1, 2019
(Lec. 269)
1) Acts 5:17-26
2) John 3:16-21

WEDNESDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Joseph the Worker)

FOCUS: Courage is a hallmark of the Christian believer.

In this Easter season, we are encouraged by the courageous and persevering example of the first disciples as they risked all to preach the Resurrection. Undergoing their trials required courage and determination, and a firm belief in the promise that all who believed would have eternal life. May we follow their example and have the grace of fortitude for our own faith life, and in order to share God's light with others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts, an angel of the Lord opens the doors of the prison in which the Apostles are jailed, allowing them to return to the Temple area and preach of the risen Christ. In the Gospel, John uses the image of light to describe Jesus, God's only-begotten Son, who came so *that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence and trust, let us bring our prayers and needs before the Father.

- 1) That the Church, as the Body of Christ, may be blessed with the gift of fortitude as she boldly proclaims Christ as Lord and Savior to the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That all nations may have hearts of conversion and come to know Jesus as the true light sent by God to enlighten our world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That all who labor in dangerous and dire circumstances, or are enslaved in any way, may be lifted up by the Lord in his mercy and granted safety and freedom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our faith community may be blessed with a growing spirit of sacrifice and generosity, enabling young men and women to hear more clearly a call to the priesthood and consecrated life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That all our beloved dead may hear the words of Jesus and be with him in paradise, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and eternal Father, you sent your only Son as Lord and Savior. Hear our prayers and grant us the grace to be always steadfast in faith and joyful in hope. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Thursday, May 2, 2019
(Lec. 270)

- 1) Acts 5:27-33
- 2) John 3:31-36

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

FOCUS: Our soul is drawn toward the divine.

Athanasius of Alexandria, a staunch defender of the full divinity of Christ, exhorts believers to move toward – and choose – things of heaven, rather than things of earth. As believers, we find a clear example in the Apostles in today's reading when they say: *We must obey God rather than men.*

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The reading from Acts describes the questioning of the Apostles by the Sanhedrin, and the response by Peter and the Apostles, who are witnesses to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. In the Gospel, John contrasts Jesus, the one who is *above all*, with one who is of the earth. The one who accepts Jesus and his testimony accepts the very testimony of God.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in the generous gift of the Holy Spirit, let us offer our petitions to our loving God.

- 1) For the leaders of the Church, may they be inspired by the example of Saint Athanasius' wisdom and perseverance as they preach the Gospel of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may God's love inspire them in promoting peace and justice wherever it is needed, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the unborn, that their sacred lives may be protected and valued, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, that God may draw us closer to him in prayer and conform us ever more to the mind of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, that they may experience fullness of joy with Saint Athanasius and all the saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, we bring our prayers to you, trusting in your goodness and in the holy name of your son, Jesus Christ.

Friday, May 3, 2019

(Lec. 561)

1) 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

2) John 14:6-14

SAINTS PHILIP AND JAMES

- FEAST

FOCUS: Jesus is *the way and the truth and the life*.

In a world of much confusion and so many voices, being a Christian has a distinct advantage. Jesus is the way that we walk – absolute truth in a world filled with relativism – and the giver of our life both here on earth and in the life to come. Our biggest task is to follow Jesus, who is everything.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, he points to the truth that he preaches – a truth handed down from Jesus. In the Gospel, Jesus explains the absolute unity that he experiences with the Father.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With faith handed down from the Apostles, we approach God in trust with the needs of our world.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may the intercession of Saints Philip and James ignite in us a zeal for spreading the Good News, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For elected officials, may God's wisdom be their guide as they seek to foster justice and truth among people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who are discouraged because of unemployment, may God grant them the gift of fortitude, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the newest members of the Church, may Christ dwell in their hearts, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have recently died, may they enter peacefully into eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God and Father of us all, we ask that you hear and answer these prayers which come from our hearts. Through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Saturday, May 4, 2019
(Lec. 272)

- 1) Acts 6:1-7
- 2) John 6:16-21

SATURDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Be not afraid! Our Lord may be out of sight, but he is never far from us to give comfort and help.

We are reminded to keep our hearts open to God and God's wonders. As the Spirit moved within the early Church – directing and redirecting the disciples as they worked to share the good news of Jesus, so he is with us. The Lord may be unseen by human eyes, but is always visible to the heart, and never far from us. We have no need to fear, for he is our comfort and our help.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The reading from Acts recounts the selection of the first deacons. In the Gospel, the disciples are at sea when they are frightened by Jesus walking on the blustery water. Jesus tells them, *Do not be afraid*, and the disciples become eager to welcome him into their boat.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With our hearts open to all the Lord has to offer us, let us present our needs and petitions.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may the Holy Spirit increase us in holiness through a fresh outpouring of his gifts, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For our government leaders, may the God of justice embolden them in peacemaking and integrity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those grieving the loss of a loved one, may the generous love of God comfort them in their sorrow, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For catechists in our faith community, may God bless their efforts in teaching the faith to our young people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may they be welcomed into the Lord's eternal kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of compassion, accept these prayers by your pilgrim people. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2019

(Lec. 48)

- 1) Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41
- 2) Revelation 5:11-14
- 3) John 21:1-19 or 21:1-14

**THIRD SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

FOCUS: Let us bring honor to Jesus' name by our words and actions.

Because of what he taught and preached, Jesus was sentenced to die. And yet, God exalted him, raising him from the dead. Those who are Jesus' disciples continue to teach and preach what he first proclaimed. In doing so, they exalt him and bring honor to his name.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Peter and the Apostles are reprimanded for teaching in Jesus' name, but they do not stop for they are obedient only to God's authority. John's vision in the reading from Revelation is of all creation giving glory to the slain Lamb. In the Gospel, Jesus appears to the disciples after his resurrection.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: My sisters and brothers, as we continue our celebration of Easter, let us now bring our prayers before the Lord.

- 1) For Pope Francis, and all bishops, may the Holy Spirit purify and sanctify them as they shepherd the Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For policymakers and elected officials, may God bless their work in protecting the dignity and sanctity of human life from conception through natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For family members in conflict, may God's love permeate their hearts and bring reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of this faith community, may God strengthen us in our witness to his saving love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all the departed, may they enjoy eternal peace in the kingdom of heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, grant these prayers and all that we hold in the silence of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

* * * * *

Monday, May 6, 2019
(Lec. 273)

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

MONDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: God working in us makes us disciples of Christ.

God worked through Stephen and the disciples, giving them the grace, wisdom and power to preach the Gospel. When we, too, allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives, we become powerful witnesses to the truth, and effective disciples for Christ.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Stephen – filled with grace and power, and through the strength of the Holy Spirit – did God’s work among the people. As a result, he was brought before the Sanhedrin on charges of blasphemy. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the crowd that they should *believe in the one [God] sent*, and work toward things of eternal life, not this life.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in our God, let us join one another in offering him our prayers and petitions.

- 1) For the Church, may God’s Holy Spirit transform us into powerful witnesses of the love of Christ in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may the Lord bless them with wisdom and courage in always pursuing the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are spiritually hungry, may God give them the eternal bread that feeds their emptiness, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may God open our eyes to his presence in our world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died in Christ, may they rise with him to new life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, we ask that you hear the prayers offered to you today. Through Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Tuesday, May 7, 2019
(Lec. 274)

- 1) Acts 7:51–8:1a
- 2) John 6:30-35

TUESDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: In the Eucharist, Jesus provides us with the graces to help us obtain eternal life.

Today's readings remind us that heaven is the goal, and that Jesus is the way to get there. By proclaiming Jesus, Saint Stephen sacrificed his life but was granted a vision of the glorified Jesus before he died. As the Bread of Life, Jesus provides himself as nourishment to strengthen us so that we can have everlasting life with him.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Stephen becomes the first martyr of the New Testament. Before his death, Stephen sees Jesus in his glory. In the Gospel, Jesus' followers ask him for a sign, like the miraculous manna. Jesus tells them that he is the true *bread of life*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting completely in the merciful love of our God, we place our needs before him.

- 1) For the Church, may God bless our efforts to bring the risen Jesus to all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For community and world leaders, may the witness of Saint Stephen guide them as they seek justice for all, especially the marginalized, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who suffer, may God's healing presence bring them comfort, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those of us gathered here, may we, by God's grace, continue to grow in appreciation for the Eucharist, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead who have died in the peace of Christ, may they find everlasting life at the banquet feast of heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Merciful Father, you sent us your Son out of love for us. We ask you to look kindly upon our petitions, through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Wednesday, May 8, 2019
(Lec. 275)

- 1) Acts 8:1b-8
- 2) John 6:35-40

WEDNESDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Jesus will raise us to be with himself, and therein resides our joy.

Living in the Easter light, we praise God for a plan of salvation that redeems everything. Jesus' promise is one of immense hope, giving us the confidence and joy that we will be with him on the last day.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Luke tells of the persecution of the early Church in Jerusalem, the burial of Stephen and the preaching of the word by those who had been dispersed. Today's Gospel recounts Jesus' words that he is *the bread of life*, and everyone who sees him and believes *may have eternal life*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence and trust, let us join together in offering our prayers to God for ourselves and our world.

- 1) For the Church, that God's plan for salvation may come to fruition in every corner of the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all those who lead and govern, that God's wisdom may guide them in charity and integrity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those oppressed for their religious views, may the Lord rescue them and comfort them in their affliction, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the needs of this local community, that the peace and hope of Christ may reign in every heart, every relationship, and every institution, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died recently or will die today, that they may come to know Jesus' promise of eternal life with him, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Merciful Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. Through your son, Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Thursday, May 9, 2019
(Lec. 276)

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

THURSDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: God tirelessly comes to us, and gives us everything we need to come to him.

As in today's readings, God comes to us, his people, and gives us what we need to come to faith. The Holy Spirit works in us, just as he sent Philip to the eunuch, and we encounter Jesus as living bread in the Eucharist. May we, too, have the grace to hear the Good News and respond with rejoicing and a desire to become ever closer to God.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit sends Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch. After learning about Jesus and the Scriptures, the eunuch immediately asks to be baptized. The Gospel comes from John's Bread of Life Discourse, and Jesus teaches that he will give his flesh for the life of the world.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in the Holy Spirit as our guide, let us offer our petitions to the Lord.

- 1) For all Church leaders, that the Holy Spirit may generously direct them in their work as they promote the life of faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who serve in public office, may the Lord give them a just heart as they exercise their governance among the people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, may the Lord hear their cry and meet their needs, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, that God may make us sensitive and responsive to the many ways he comes to us each day, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died this day, may the Lord bring them into his eternal rest, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers according to your holy will. Through Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Friday, May 10, 2019
(Lec. 277)

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

FRIDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.

USA: Saint Damien de Veuster,
Priest)

FOCUS: God nourishes us and gives us strength.

God nourishes us with his word through the Scriptures, through the abundance of grace in the world, and through his presence in the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist is bread that nourishes us and gives us strength in our life journey.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading gives the account of the conversion of Saint Paul. He is blinded by the power of God. A disciple named Ananias ministers to him and heals him. In the Gospel, Jesus declares that he is the Bread of Life; whoever eats his flesh and drinks his blood will live forever.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With faith and confidence, let us turn to God who hears all of our prayers.

- 1) For the Church, may Christ's merciful love be her guide and strength, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the unborn and all the vulnerable, may their sacred lives be valued and protected, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who face addiction, may Jesus, the Divine Physician, offer them strength, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For couples in this faith community who are planning to be wed or celebrating an anniversary this month, may God bless them with the grace to grow more deeply in his love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all of our beloved dead, may they be welcomed into the heavenly kingdom through God's grace and mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of all, you hear our prayers with mercy and compassion. We ask that your grace fill both our spiritual and bodily needs, through Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Saturday, May 11, 2019
(Lec. 278)

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

SATURDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: *We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.*

When Jesus first taught that we were to eat his flesh and drink his blood, people were scandalized. Many people left him. But Jesus reminded those who remained – including us today – that he alone is the only way to know the Father. We have the grace and gift of his sacrifice in the Eucharist, and are blessed to receive him in the belief that he is the *Holy One of God*.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Peter travels far and wide, preaching and healing people in Jesus' name. This includes curing a paralytic and raising a woman from the dead. In the Gospel, many of Jesus' disciples *returned to their former way of life and no longer walked with him* because they could not accept his difficult teachings.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in our merciful God, let us present our petitions to the Father.

- 1) That the Church may continue to be blessed with disciples who preach the Good News with zeal, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That elected officials may be inspired by the Holy Spirit as they ensure the safety and dignity of all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who feel despair may be blessed with peace and consolation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the people of this faith community may receive with gratitude God's miracle-working power in our lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may look upon the glorious face of God forever in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, show your love to us in big and small ways. Hear our prayers and grant what is in your will for us. We pray through our Lord Jesus Christ.

* * * * *

SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2019

(Lec. 51)

- 1) Acts 13:14, 43-52
- 2) Revelation 7:9, 14b-17
- 3) John 10:27-30

**FOURTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

FOCUS: Jesus, our Good Shepherd, grasps us by the hand.

Good Shepherd Sunday is celebrated around the world on the Fourth Sunday of Easter. Jesus knows each one of us and we know his voice. To follow him is to know eternal life.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

As Paul and Barnabas continue their travels, they encounter more Gentiles who are receptive to their message. In John's vision, a great multitude from every corner of the earth is seen gathering together. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of his sheep knowing his voice and following after him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: On this Good Shepherd Sunday, let us gather our petitions and present them to our loving God.

- 1) For missionaries in the Church, may God protect and guide them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all civic leaders, may they, with God's grace, assist the diverse communities they serve in living together in harmony, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For married couples experiencing difficulties, may God open their hearts to forgiveness and reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this community of believers, may God grant us the virtues we need to be his faithful disciples, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all the faithful departed, may they join the angels and saints in heaven singing God's praises, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Good and gentle Father, hear the prayers of your sheep and bestow on us your wisdom and grace. We make our prayer through your son, Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Monday, May 13, 2019
(Lec. 279)
1) Acts 11:1-18
2) John 10:1-10

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

FOCUS: All of Jesus' sheep are saved because they know his voice and they follow him.

God's grace is a gift to those who believe. Jesus' sheep know who he is, and they follow his voice as they strive for the life that he offers to them. Jesus freely gives his life and mercy to those who listen to his word.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The early Christians, who come out of the Jewish tradition, wrestle with including the Gentiles as fellow believers in Christ. In the Gospel, Jesus says he is the gate for his sheep, and that *whoever enters through [him] will be saved*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: My sisters and brothers, let us gather our prayers and offer them to our merciful Father.

- 1) For the Church, may Christ, the Good Shepherd protect us from all evil, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders, may the Holy Spirit guide them in defending the dignity and sanctity of human life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who experience rejection and prejudice, may they feel the embrace of God's merciful love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all in our faith community who are receiving the sacraments of initiation during this Easter season, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they see God face-to-face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear our prayers and give us the grace to live according to your will, we pray through your son, Christ, our Lord.

* * * * *

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

(Lec. 564)

1) Acts 1:15-17, 20-26

2) John 15:9-17

**SAINT MATTHIAS,
APOSTLE
- FEAST**

FOCUS: Each one of us is called, each one of us is sent, to proclaim God's word.

God used Peter and the early Church to confirm Matthias as Apostle, making the company of Apostles complete. We, too, are called, and as members of the body of Christ, we are sent to bring the Good News to all.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Our reading from the Acts of the Apostles describes how the early Church chose Matthias to take the place of Judas as one of the Twelve Apostles. In John's Gospel, Jesus instructs us to remain in his love, following his commandments, and to love one another as he loves us.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in God's love, let us lift up our prayers to him.

- 1) For the Pilgrim Church on earth, that reflecting God's love and joy we may draw many souls to Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For judges, may God's grace strengthen them in upholding fairness and justice, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the lonely and all who struggle with grief and loss, may the love of Jesus be their comfort and consolation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For an increase in vocations in this faith community, may God open the hearts of those he is calling, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our loved ones and all who have died, that rejoicing with the saints, their joy may be complete, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father in heaven, we thank you for your faithfulness. Please hear and answer our prayers this day according to your wisdom. We ask through Jesus Christ, your son.

* * * * *

Wednesday, May 15, 2019
(Lec. 281)

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

WEDNESDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
USA: Saint Isidore)

FOCUS: Jesus is the Light of the World, bringing salvation to all who believe in him.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus identifies himself as one with the Father, sent to be light to the world. Jesus has not come to condemn the world, but to save it. What a marvelous gift! Even when all seems lost, when the world or the Church herself lets us down, we have no real cause for despair. For we have faith in Jesus, who brings salvation and hope to all who believe.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The leaders in the Church of Antioch laid hands upon Barnabas and Saul and sent them off to do the work of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of his unity with the Father, who sent him to give eternal life to all who believe.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As believers in the word, let us come before the Father with all of our needs.

- 1) For the Church, may the Holy Spirit grant the faithful the grace to be humble witnesses of Christ's merciful love in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders throughout the world, may God's Holy Spirit renew their commitment in serving with justice and peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are homeless or struggling to keep their homes, may the Holy Spirit bring them strength and comfort, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all of us gathered here, may God grant in us contrite hearts so we may grow in the fullness of his love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they be welcomed into the heavenly banquet, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Good and gracious God, look upon us with love and answer our prayers. We pray in the name of Jesus, Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Thursday, May 16, 2019
(Lec. 282)

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

THURSDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: To receive Jesus Christ is to receive the fullness of God's saving work throughout history.

In today's readings, we are reminded that receiving Jesus Christ is receiving God, whose promise of salvation has been with us from the beginning. Partaking of the Eucharist connects us to all who have gone before us, and all who will come after us, in the redemption of creation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading shares Paul's preaching in Antioch, where he places Jesus within God's work of salvation through the history of Israel. In the Gospel, Jesus encourages his disciples to believe that he is God's Son, sent to save.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Remembering that God's saving power continues to be present here in our midst, we offer our prayers to him in trust and hope.

- 1) For the Church, may God grant us courage in sharing his saving love and truth with all those to whom we are sent, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all those in positions of political power, may they be granted the virtues of courage and prudence in their decision making, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who feel betrayed or unrecognized, may God send loving friends and family into their lives to offer healing and relationship, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all those gathered here, may God enliven us in faith that we may be ever more conformed to the heart and mind of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may they rest in the peace of God's love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of hope and mercy, thank you for hearing our prayers. We ask that you would open our hearts to your work in our lives, that we may participate in the miracle of your salvation. Through Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Friday, May 17, 2019
(Lec. 283)
1) Acts 13:26-33
2) John 14:1-6

FRIDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: *Do not let your hearts be troubled.*

The people of Jerusalem did not recognize Jesus as God's begotten Son even though Sabbath after Sabbath they read the prophets' oracles. Still, God fulfilled the promise he made to their fathers, who are our forebearers as well, by raising Jesus from the dead, so all can recognize that he is truly the way and the truth and the life.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the synagogue at Antioch, Paul expounds on the condemnation and death of Jesus in Jerusalem, reminding his hearers that God's promise to their fathers was fulfilled in God raising Jesus from the dead. In the Gospel, Jesus exhorts his disciples to have faith in him as they have faith in God because he is *the way and the truth and the life*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trusting hearts, let us turn to God with our prayers and petitions.

- 1) That all members of the Church are guided by Jesus alone, who is the way and the truth and the life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That the Spirit may empower elected officials in acting with integrity and justice, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That the Light of Christ may guide those who are fearful or hurt, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the Scriptures we heard today may enliven this community of faith to grow in love for the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That all who have died in the peace of Christ may live forever in the heavenly dwelling place prepared for them by our Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Compassionate God, in your great mercy you fulfill your promises and keep safe those you have saved by your kindness. Hear our prayers this day, we beseech you, and grant them as is your will, through Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Saturday, May 18, 2019
(Lec. 284)

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

SATURDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint John I,
Pope and Martyr)

FOCUS: God calls us to have courage to demonstrate his love toward others.

Our Lord said if we see *him*, we know God the Father. There are many in the world who do not know God and yet desperately need him. We can show the love of God to others through our actions and our words. He will give us the strength and wisdom to represent him.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Acts, Saint Paul and Barnabas travel to Antioch to proclaim the Gospel to all. It made the Jews angry to see the Gentiles turning to God, so they persecuted Paul and Barnabas. In the Gospel, Jesus tells us if we have seen him, we have seen God the Father.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us turn our hearts to God, knowing he hears and answers our prayers.

- 1) For the Church, the body of Christ on earth, may the power of the Holy Spirit provide the graces we need in spreading the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may God open their hearts in working for religious freedom everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those oppressed by poverty and fear, may Jesus give them new life and hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, may the Spirit guide us as we represent Christ in our actions and our words, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they share fully in the joy of the saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, we ask that you hear the intentions of your people today. Help us be strong witnesses of your redeeming love wherever we go. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

* * * * *

SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2019

(Lec. 54)

- 1) Acts 14:21-27
- 2) Revelation 21:1-5a
- 3) John 13:31-33a, 34-35

**FIFTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

FOCUS: We glory in the victorious love of Christ.

All true love has its origins in God, who is love itself, and so the Christian believer must seek to love as God loves, and to share love as abundantly as God shares it with his creation. Love is the very hallmark of the Christian life.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Paul and Barnabas continue their travels, strengthening the spirits of the disciples and giving an account of all that God has done with them. In the second reading, John foretells the restored creation where God will make his home among his people and wipe away all their tears. Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment to love one another.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As a people united in one faith, let us ask God to hear our prayers and pray for his peace upon our lives and upon our world.

- 1) For all Christians, may the power of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension enable us in rising above all that divides us as we proclaim him as sovereign Lord and Savior, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For governments and world leaders, may the Gospel message of hope and redemption for all inform and direct their decisions and actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, may they experience God's healing touch, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the young people in this faith community, may Jesus be their guide as they discern ways to use their gifts and talents, 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: Eternal Father, whose mercies are immense and beyond counting, hear our prayers this day, and in the power of your risen Son grant us our needs and requests. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Monday, May 20, 2019
(Lec. 285)

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

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

FOCUS: To love the Lord means living in accordance with his commands.

Obedience to Jesus' teachings is the measure of our love for the Lord. The reward for our faithfulness is the love of God dwelling within us. When we are not sure what obeying Jesus' commands means in the context of our lives today, the Holy Spirit is there to guide and instruct us on the right path.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading, the crowds see the Apostles' proclamation of the Good News as affirmation of their pagan belief rather than a call to faith in the living God. In the Gospel, Jesus reminds us that those who love him obey his commandments, promising his and the Father's abiding presence to those who do. He also promises the gift of the Holy Spirit.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us lift up our prayers and petitions before the Lord our God, who is loving and merciful.

- 1) For the Church, may the Holy Spirit continue to guide and instruct us in giving witness to the Gospel today, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For educators, counselors and other leaders, may the Lord strengthen them in their vocation of teaching and guiding others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who have lost their way in life, may Jesus' gentle call of love and obedience move their hearts to conversion, let us pray to the Lord
- 4) For all who worship and live in this community, may the Lord bless us with an ever-growing faith in his love and promises, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may the Lord grant them eternal joy in his presence, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of love, receive these petitions we have brought before you in faith, and answer them in accordance with your divine providence. Through Christ our Lord.

Tuesday, May 21, 2019
(Lec. 286)

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

TUESDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Christopher Magallanes,
Priest,
and Companions,
Martyrs)

FOCUS: Jesus' peace goes beyond the surface feeling of comfort – it is a peace that reaches the depths of our hearts.

Peace is a word that carries different meanings depending on its context. For example, one who works in a very noisy environment may equate peace with a lack of sound. Peace of mind may indicate a freedom from mental anguish or anxiety. Jesus offers us a greater peace. His peace is that of the Hebrew word *shalom*, which reaches more deeply into our being. It is a wish for wholeness and holiness.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading from Acts, we find Saint Paul being stoned and left for dead, only to arise from that incident to travel with a companion to continue teaching the Gospel. Today's Gospel is from a Last Supper Discourse in which Jesus declares his love for the Father, and offers his deep heavenly peace to his Apostles.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us call on the mercy of the Father in offering up our prayers.

- 1) For the Church, may the power of God's love transform us and call us to repentance where needed, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all those in leadership positions, may God's grace grant them fortitude in striving for what is right and good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all those suffering from anxiety and mental anguish, may Christ's peace refresh and console them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community who are considering vocations to the priesthood and religious life, may the Holy Spirit give them courage in their discernment, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all our loved ones who have died, may they experience true peace in the arms of Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petitions)

PRIEST: Merciful Father, we humbly ask you to hear our prayers and grant our petitions. We ask this through your son, Christ our Lord.

Wednesday, May 22, 2019
(Lec. 287)

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

WEDNESDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Rita of Cascia,
Religious)

FOCUS: Jesus is the vine and we are the branches, and he calls us to a life-giving relationship with him.

Jesus is our center, the vine that nourishes and sustains us. He tells us that we are the branches, and that we bear fruit through our connection to God, the life-giving vine. It is only by remaining true to Jesus and his message that we can grow in faith and share in the life of Christ.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading from Acts of the Apostles, the early Church takes on questions about rules for accepting Gentiles into the fold. In the Gospel, Jesus explains that he is the vine and we are the branches. He calls us to remain in him to bear much fruit.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As we work to bear fruit in our relationship with God, let us join our hearts as we present our prayers to the Father.

- 1) That God's grace may strengthen all members of the Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That the Holy Spirit may grant wisdom to those in authority, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That God will extend his healing power over those who face loss or hardship, sickness or pain, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That God may bless and strengthen the bonds of family members in this faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died will live eternally in the presence of our loving Father, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we offer these prayers in love, and we trust that you will take care of our needs. We ask this through your son, Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Thursday, May 23, 2019
(Lec. 288)

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

THURSDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: God's commandments lead us to find fullness of joy.

The law of God is meant to draw us closer to God. While we might struggle to understand how God calls us to live in this world, we must recognize that at the heart of each of God's commandments is love. Our Easter season invites us to grow in understanding of God's abundant love.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In this passage from Acts, the early Church has intensely debated what laws to keep for the Gentile converts. Peter reminds those gathered that God makes no distinction, and that all are united in God's saving grace. In the Gospel, Jesus proclaims that following God's commandments allow us to remain in God's love and find complete joy.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us open our hearts and offer our prayers to our merciful God.

- 1) That the holy Church may be guided by God's love in proclaiming the Gospel message of joy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That God may bring restoration and unity to those areas in the world that need it the most, especially those torn apart by armed conflict, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who despair in their great needs may be comforted by God's abundant love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That those in this faith community who are sick may find healing in God's merciful presence, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may find eternal joy in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving Father, you call us to complete joy in you. Help us to grow in your abundant grace, following your call to share your love with others. We ask this through your son, Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Friday, May 24, 2019
(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.*

In his great love for the Apostles, Jesus reminds them of the essential message he came to bring: God is love and wants us to become one with him by accepting and sharing his love with others. He commands the Apostles to love one another as he loves them. By doing so, they remain connected to him and to the Father.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the Apostles choose representatives to preach to the Gentiles. In the Gospel, Jesus prepares the Apostles for his departure, proclaiming the message they are to teach and live: *love one another as I love you.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing God's great love for us, we ask him to hear the prayers we offer.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may the grace of the Holy Spirit enable us in tireless witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of countries, may God's love of all people inspire them in enacting policies that promote the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who feel unwelcome, rejected or abandoned, may God's love permeate their lives and bring them consolation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, may the words of Jesus guide us in overcoming our differences and loving each other as Jesus loves us, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead, may they experience the fullness of God's love as they join him in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we place our trust in you and ask that you grant our petitions. Through your son, Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Saturday, May 25, 2019
(Lec. 290)

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

SATURDAY OF
FIFTH WEEK
OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.)

Saint Bede the Venerable,
Priest and Doctor of the Church;
Saint Gregory VII,
Pope;
Saint Mary Magdalene de 'Pazzi,
Virgin)

FOCUS: We do not belong to the world, we belong to Jesus.

Jesus' words regarding persecution and hardship for his followers are not new to us. But with each passing day, and new challenges in our lives and in our world, our appreciation of his warning grows. Trusting in the promptings of the Spirit can help us overcome difficulties, and we can take consolation in belonging to Jesus, rather than to the world.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from the Acts of the Apostles, we hear of Paul's missionary travels and his recruitment of Timothy. It also gives witness to Paul's close following of the Spirit. The Gospel recounts Jesus' sober warning that his followers will be persecuted, just as he was persecuted and hated by the world.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident that the Lord is near, let us offer him our petitions.

- 1) For priests and deacons who preach the Gospel, may God bless their holy witness and be their strength in times of difficulty, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the protection of the dignity and sanctity of human life, from conception through natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For Christians who are persecuted because of their faith in Christ, may God grant them strength and perseverance, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in this faith community who suffer discord at home, may God bring healing to their relationships and grant them peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may they enjoy eternal peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, we ask that you hear all of our prayers, those we have spoken aloud and those that are deep in our hearts. Through Christ our Lord.

SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2019

(Lec. 57)

- 1) Acts 15:1-2, 22-29
- 2) Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23
- 3) John 14:23-29

**SIXTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit will teach us and remind us of what Jesus taught.

Jesus assures us in the Gospel that he will dwell within us, and the Holy Spirit will teach us and remind us of what he taught. This is good news for us, because it means we are not making this Christian journey alone, two thousand years removed from a period in human time. We are today, like the early Church of Jerusalem, taught and guided by the Spirit. We need only to listen and have faith in his working in us.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, a letter from the Church in Jerusalem is delivered to the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. In it they are assured that they are under no burdens of the Mosaic law. Revelation gives us a vision of splendor: the holy city Jerusalem. Jesus, in the Gospel, tells his disciples that he and the Father will dwell within those who love him and keep his word. He also promises to send the Holy Spirit as an Advocate.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: We worship a God of life and of love, so in confidence we approach him with our needs.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may the Holy Spirit grant us the gifts of wisdom and knowledge in joyfully proclaiming the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For agriculture ministers and those who tend the land, and for all who work to cultivate and distribute food to those most in need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who are burdened by mental illness, may they experience God's love through those who assist them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those of us gathered here, may God open our hearts to the workings of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, may they find rest in the arms of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of Easter Joy, hear these prayers we place before you in confidence of your love and mercy. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our risen Lord and Savior.

* * * * *

Monday, May 27, 2019
(Lec. 291)
1) Acts 16:11-15
2) John 15:26–16:4a

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

FOCUS: God has a plan for us.

The Lord has a plan for our lives, during good times as well as difficult ones. The Father sent Jesus Christ to bring us to salvation. Ultimately, he desires our redemption and will not abandon us. Living in joy is possible for us when we trust in him and rely on him in all circumstances.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Lydia, a cloth merchant, responds to the Gospel and is baptized. She opens her home to Paul while he is there as a missionary. In the Gospel, Jesus promises the Apostles that he is going to send the Holy Spirit as his Advocate.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing that God, our Father, is with us, always leading us, let us turn to him with our petitions.

- 1) For the Church, that Christ may guide our path and open our hearts to his word, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may God make known to them his plan to bring peace and healing to the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those filled with despair or hopelessness, may the comfort of God's loving compassion uplift them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community, may Easter joy continue to fill our hearts and permeate our lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have preceded us in death, may they soon find themselves in the presence of God in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, thank you for your love and for bringing us together to worship you. We ask that you hear our petitions and grant us the wisdom to accept your will. Through your son, Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Tuesday, May 28, 2019
(Lec. 292)
1) Acts 16:22-34
2) John 16:5-11

TUESDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: Belief in Jesus saves.

The Farewell Discourse given by Jesus in the Gospel of John is actually a description of what has already happened by the time of the evangelist. The world failed to believe in Jesus, and the Spirit came to condemn this rejection. However, there is hope. As we hear in the first reading, those who believe in Jesus will be saved.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading, Paul and Silas are rescued from jail by an earthquake, and they baptize the jailer and his household. The Gospel reading comes from Jesus' Farewell Discourse to his disciples. He tells them that after he goes, he will send the Advocate, and the Advocate will convict the world.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With the Holy Spirit as our Advocate, we bring our prayers to the Father through the Son.

- 1) That those welcomed into the Church at the Easter Vigil may continue experiencing God-given joy in their newfound faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That policymakers may receive the gifts of wisdom and counsel while ensuring justice for all God's people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That all prisoners may experience the mercy and consolation of faith in Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our belief in the Lord Jesus may be strengthened daily, in our witness of hope to the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died believing in Christ may be rewarded with eternal salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of mercy and love, you sent your Spirit to convict the world. We ask that you hear the prayers we offer today. Through Christ our Lord.

* * * * *

Wednesday, May 29, 2019
(Lec. 293)

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

WEDNESDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: The Spirit guides us on our search for truth.

In his sermon, Paul appeals to his audience's desire for knowledge and truth. Discerning what comes from God can be challenging, and our souls can become weary with searching. This innate desire to seek truth comes from our Creator, and allows us to journey closer to God. The Spirit is our guide on this journey, and continues to declare the Good News in our world today.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Acts of the Apostles, Paul preaches to a Gentile audience in Athens. He emphasizes God as Creator, and the human search for the divine. He ends his sermon by pointing to Jesus as the resurrected man who will *judge the world with justice*. In today's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that there is much more to tell them, but that they cannot bear it now. But that when the Spirit comes, he will declare the same truth that Jesus proclaimed.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God's mercy and love, let us offer him our prayers for the Church and the world.

- 1) For Church leaders, may the Holy Spirit continue to inspire them in teaching the truth of Jesus Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For our elected officials, both nationally and locally, may God guide their decisions and actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For anyone suffering from illness of the mind or body, may God grant them healing and peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in this faith community who devote their lives to public service, may God protect and strengthen them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they receive their everlasting dwelling place in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, help us to be aware of your steadfast love. We thank you for hearing the prayers we bring to you. We pray through your son, Jesus our Lord.

* * * * *

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, June 2. If transferred, Thursday, May 30, is observed as an Easter Weekday or as the following Optional Memorials: Saint Damien de Veuster, Priest. The following readings are used: Acts 18:1-8/John 16:16-20(294).

Thursday, May 30, 2019

(Lec. 58)

- 1) Acts 1:1-11
- 2) Ephesians 1:17-23
or Hebrews 9:24-28; 10:19-23
- 3) Luke 24:46-53

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

FOCUS: Jesus has prepared the way, and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us along.

Occurring between the two other major feasts of Easter and Pentecost, the Ascension can be overlooked or lost. Perhaps today is a good day to reflect on what Jesus' return to the Father means to us: that he has fully prepared our way to the Father, and that we are never alone. The Holy Spirit is within us and around us as our Advocate.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Luke recounts the many times that Jesus presented himself alive to his Apostles, his promise of the Holy Spirit to come, and Jesus' being *lifted up*, [where] a cloud took him from their sight. In the second reading, Paul prays that the Ephesians may have wisdom and knowledge of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that they are witnesses to the things that had been written and fulfilled. Then he blesses them and is *taken up to heaven*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With faith in his loving mercy, we call upon the Lord to hear our needs and to respond to us with his great love.

- 1) For the Church on earth, the body of Christ, may the Spirit of the Lord inspire us as faithful disciples, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of the world, may God's Holy Spirit bestow upon them the gifts of counsel and fortitude, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those of struggling faith, may God's grace offer them new hope and strength in the risen Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in this faith community suffering any form of loss, may Christ's compassion and our love for them ease their grief, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may Jesus, who sits at the Father's right hand, greet them and welcome them into the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Most gracious Father, hear us as we place before you our needs, confident in your love for us. We pray through your son, Christ our Lord. * * * * *

OPTIONAL COMMENTARY FOR MAY 30

Thursday, May 30, 2019

(Lec. 294)

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

THURSDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK
OF EASTER

FOCUS: If we believe in Jesus, the difficulties of this life will give way to joy.

Saint Paul preached the Gospel to both the Gentiles and the Jews, because the good news of redemption was meant for all. Some he encountered were not receptive to his message, and others were. We probably act in similar ways at times, as we experience being more or less open to what he is asking of us. But through it all, we know that belief in Jesus is the only way through this life that includes trials and difficulties. For Jesus promises that in the end, we will have eternal joy.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Paul stays in Corinth, preaching Jesus to both Jews and Greeks. The Jews did not believe him and criticized him, so Paul left to share the Gospel with the Gentiles instead. Jesus tells the disciples that soon they will not see him, but then later they will see him again. They also will grieve but it will give way to joy.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Gathering the thoughts and concerns we hold in our hearts, we turn with confidence to our loving Father.

- 1) For missionaries around the world, that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide them as they preach the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For policymakers, that God may guide them in their efforts in supporting human life and dignity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who mourn, that they may be comforted by the love of Jesus shining through those in their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all of us gathered here, that God may sanctify us in our witness to him, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died in Christ, may they also live forever with him, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Eternal Father, we ask you to hear the prayers of your children gathered here today. We ask this in the name of your son, Jesus Christ.

* * * * *

Friday, May 31, 2019

(Lec. 572)

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

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

FOCUS: *Blessed are you among women.*

Because Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit, she is able to proclaim upon seeing Mary, *Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.* May we be filled with the Holy Spirit as well so as to recognize the presence of Christ.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading from Romans, Paul explains what the Christian life looks like. He speaks of love, service, prayer, hope, hospitality, harmony and humility. In the Gospel, Mary travels to visit Elizabeth, who greets her with knowledge from the Holy Spirit. Mary responds with a hymn of praise to the Lord (the *Magnificat*), as she rejoices in God our Savior.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With pure and sincere hearts, let us bring our petitions before the Father.

- 1) For the Church, may God give each one of us the grace to be like Mary, praising him through our yes to his perfect plan, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For elected officials and all in positions of leadership, may God open their hearts to continued conversion as they serve the people they represent, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the unborn, may God bless the efforts of those who work to uphold their dignity and worth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, that through Mary's example and intercession, we may grow in holy obedience to all God asks of us, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they be welcomed into the halls of heaven with the Blessed Mother and the communion of saints, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, we bring you these and all of our intentions today, as we trust in your goodness and Mary's intercession. We ask this through your son, Christ our Lord.

* * * * *