

Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 10, 2020

The calming voice of Jesus sounds out across the centuries to us today and says “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (John 14:1). He calls us to have faith in the face of adversity because there is wonderment ahead. Be ye steadfast. Hang on in there, followers of Christ. What’s more is that Jesus makes one of the famous seven “I am” statements in John’s Gospel: “I am the way and the truth and the life” (John 14:6).[†] This familiar passage is proclaimed at many funerals, where the vision of God’s many mansions also comforts and calms.

Furthermore, there’s a place in God’s reign for everybody –in the words of the spiritual there’s “Plenty Good Room.” The early church – even before it was called “church” – discovered just that and what inclusion required, as we can see in today’s selection from Acts. We see diversity being honored at the very dawn of our faith tradition with the Greek-speaking members asking and receiving equal attention for their vulnerable widows as the Hebrew-speaking believers were enjoying for their families in need.

What’s more the “in-dwelling” with God can begin right now, on this side of paradise. Furthermore, God-with-us-and-in-us can transform every bit of death we’ve experienced in our lives. In a reflection about this reading published in the May 2020 issue of Give Us This Day: Daily Prayer for Today’s Catholic, Alice Camille writes: “There’s more to us than birth, death, and the factors that lie between. Believers speak of Paschal Mystery: the bold affirmation that weakness, suffering, and death lead to wonder beyond the tomb. We go where Jesus goes—a startling reality to embrace.”

[†] The seven “I am” statements in John’s Gospel include

“I am the bread of life....” (John 6:35)

“I am the light of the world....” (John 8:12)

“I am the gate for the sheep....” (John 10:7)

“I am the good shepherd...” (John 10:11)

“I am the resurrection and the life....” (John 11:25)

“I am the way and the truth and the life....” (John 14:6)

Camille, who is author with Paul Boudreau of Fearless: Stories of American Saints, continues: “In the Collect prayer today we make a bold request: ‘Constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us.’ Think of what we’re asking! Lord, we say; only this: bring every bit of death in us back to life. And do this, Lord, not just today, but relentlessly. Shatter the odds, change the terms, undo the math. See who we’ve turned into. Then make us more.”

This passage from John is part of a five-chapter Farewell Address Jesus makes – echoing what the Hebrew Patriarchs did on the eve of their deaths, namely take a final opportunity to teach, comfort, warn, and inspire. Some commentaries call the chapters 13 to 17 of John, “the last evening with Jesus.” And it is a discourse not without puns and confusion. Blessed Thomas jumps in with a question all the disciples must have had: “Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” The way could mean the GPS route. The way also could signify the manner of living. Or it could be a whole movement. Early believers were said to be followers of “the way”. It was only later that they were called Christians.

Believing in Jesus is also doing the works that he does (John 14:12). And our Acts reading shows us that these eye-witnesses of Jesus’ love for everyone, especially the forgotten, make sure that the community carries forward this love. Therefore, they commission collaborators who are to look after the needy (Acts 6:1-6): the seven deacons. The service with the vulnerable is a fundamental dimension of the church. We sing, “I want to be in the service one more time.” That service is solidarity with the people excluded by our economic system and driven into worse poverty, it is solidarity with those who encounter closed doors and hearts because of their social insignificance – the sick, the elderly, the immigrant, the rejected. This service dimension of our faith also entails raising our voices in advocacy, advancing solutions, changing systems.

Hear the voice of God calling you into the service in today’s scriptures, as you worship in solidarity with the Lourdes community.

**Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home: Good Shepherd
Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 10, 2020**

Greeting: In the name of the Father, † and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Assembly: Amen

Jesus, you are the way that leads us to new life:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you are the truth enlightening our minds:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you life that has destroyed the death's power:

Lord, have mercy.

Collect:

Almighty ever-living God, constantly accomplish
the Paschal Mystery within us. Enliven our faith,
that through Christ we may put our trust in you.
Deepen our faith, that in Christ we may serve you.

Complete our faith, that one day we may live with you
in that place which Christ prepares for us,
where he lives with you now and always
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God forever and ever.

Let the church say – Amen.

Readings for the Fifth Sunday of Easter

Reading 1

Acts 6: 1 – 7

As the number of disciples continued to grow,
the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews
because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.
So the Twelve called together the community of the disciples and said,
“It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table.
Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men,
filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task,
whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”
The proposal was acceptable to the whole community,

so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit,
also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas,
and Nicholas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

They presented these men to the apostles
who prayed and laid hands on them.

The word of God continued to spread,
and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly;
even a large group of priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

The word of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

(Psalm 33)

Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

Exult, you just, in the LORD;
praise from the upright is fitting.
Give thanks to the LORD on the harp;
with the ten-stringed lyre chant his praises.

R. Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

Upright is the word of the LORD,
and all his works are trustworthy.
He loves justice and right;
of the kindness of the LORD the earth is full.

R. Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

See, the eyes of the LORD are upon those who fear him,
upon those who hope for his kindness,
To deliver them from death
and preserve them in spite of famine.

R. Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

Lord let your mer - cy be on us as we
place our trust in you.

setting by Tim Maxey

Beloved:

Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings
but chosen and precious in the sight of God,
and, like living stones,
let yourselves be built into a spiritual house
to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices
acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

For it says in Scripture:

Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion,
a cornerstone, chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in it shall not be put to shame.

Therefore, its value is for you who have faith, but for those without faith:

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone, and

A stone that will make people stumble,
and a rock that will make them fall.

They stumble by disobeying the word, as is their destiny.

You are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood,
a holy nation, a people of his own,
so that you may announce the praises” of him
who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

The word of the Lord

Alleluia Verse

John 14:6

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the way, the truth and the life, says the Lord;
no one comes to the Father, except through me.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel
John 14:1 - 12

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.

You have faith in God; have faith also in me.

In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.

If there were not,

would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?

And if I go and prepare a place for you,

I will come back again and take you to myself,

so that where I am you also may be.

Where I am going you know the way.”

Thomas said to him,

“Master, we do not know where you are going;

how can we know the way?”

Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me.

If you know me, then you will also know my Father.

From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said to him,

“Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.”

Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you for so long a time

and you still do not know me, Philip?

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.

How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?

The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own.

The Father who dwells in me is doing his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me,

or else, believe because of the works themselves.

Amen, amen, I say to you,

whoever believes in me will do the works that I do,

and will do greater ones than these,

because I am going to the Father.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Contemplation Prompts

Jesus gives us a poetic image of a heavenly mansion where Jesus is reserving “a room with a view” for us. This dwelling place of which Jesus speaks is the profound union with him that is both a present reality and a continually deepening movement that will be brought to completion in the fullness of time. Here are some points that may prompt some inward reflection. In silence, consider each of the following for a few minutes:

1. Jesus declares that he is “the way, the truth and the life.” Let Jesus, the Way, lead you into the place of indwelling with God.
2. Jesus says here, “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” What troubles your heart? In the words of the old song, “Have a little talk with Jesus; tell him all about your troubles.”
3. Ask Jesus to lead you beyond your hesitations, beyond your fears into that place that is prepared for you.

After this meditative period, you could listen to Walter Hawkins’ “God Will Open Doors” (1978)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kJB87nLYn8>

Then move into the intercessions followed by singing or reciting the Lord’s Prayer.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS – May 10, 2020

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Leader: Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life. Led along the pathways of faith, we call out to God in our need.

Reader:

1. For the pope and all the church’s leaders, that their vision, words and actions may witness to a deep love for all humanity and for the Earth itself. We pray: **Renew us, O God.** (RESPOND: **Renew us, O God.**)

2. On this Mother's Day, we pray for all the women who have mothered us, loved us and believed in us; for the unsung women who are caregivers. We pray: **Renew us, O God, O God.**
3. For all those women who birthed movements for civil rights, justice and inclusion. We pray: **Renew us, O God, O God.**
4. In gratitude for great visionaries who have illuminated our way; for Archbishop Oscar Romero, Sr. Thea Bowman, Martin Luther King Jr., Dorothy Day, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Nelson Mandela. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**
5. For all those who will be graduating full of hope for the possibility of contributing to a better world. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**
6. For Archbishop Hartmayer as he begins his sojourn as shepherd of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, that he be blessed with vision, stamina and humor. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**
7. For the rebirth of tolerance in our world, and leaders who model mutual respect toward others considered different. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**
8. For all our loved ones in the military and their families, that they be returned to us safely and experience a welcoming community. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**
9. For a spirit of the Common Good to flower in our nation, as we all observe prudent sheltering, masking and distancing in this time of pandemic. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**
10. For an end to the Death Penalty and Human Trafficking, especially in Georgia. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**
11. For all those 33 million people who are now unemployed as well as those who are underemployed or underpaid, that they find the work they seek and be paid a living wage. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**
12. For all those who are separated from us by infirmity, especially those afflicted by the corona-virus, and for all those living with HIV and

AIDS, that they know our community's care for them. We pray:
Renew us, O God.

13. For all the dead, that God may bring them to a haven of rest and peace, especially Anne Ellis Godwin for whom this Mass is being celebrated. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**

14. Please share any intention you have [PAUSE.....] as well as all our own needs. We pray: **Renew us, O God.**

Leader: Welcoming God, in your house, there are many dwelling places. There's plenty good room for us all. Help us to mirror that hospitality in our lives. We ask this in the name of Jesus who promised to be with us. LET THE CHURCH SAY.....AMEN!

Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

Lord, remain close to the people you have enriched with these heavenly mysteries, and grant that we may pass from our former ways to new life in the risen Christ.

We make our prayer in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

LET THE CHURCH SAY: AMEN

MOTHERS DAY PRAYER AND BLESSING

Lord, on this day set aside to honor and remember mothers, we give you thanks for our mothers. We are grateful that you chose to give us life through them, and that they received the gift of life from your hands, and gave it to us.

Thank you for the sacrifices they made in carrying us and giving birth. We thank you for the women who raised us, who were our mothers in childhood. Whether birth mom, adopted mom, older sister, aunt, grandmother, stepmother, or someone else, we thank you for those women who held us and fed us, who cared for us and

kissed away our pain. We pray that our lives may reflect the love they showed us, and that they would be pleased to be called our moms.

Lord, we thank you for the gift of motherhood. We thank you for the many examples of faithful mothers in Scripture, like Sarah, Hannah, Elizabeth, and Lois. We are mindful this day of all these women, and especially Mary the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, who had the courage in faith to say “Yes” to your calling. May the women in our world emulate these examples of faith. And may they model for all the rest of us what it means to be your disciple.

Bless these nurturing women in our lives and let them be comforted by someday hearing Jesus say to them, “Well done good and faithful servants.” Let the Church say.....AMEN!

Blessing:

**May the God who joined you to Christ's resurrection
by faith and baptism lead you to live justly
and so bring you to your home in heaven.**

LET THE CHURCH SAY: AMEN

Closing Hymn

I Want to be a Follower of Christ

by J.W. Harris

I want to be a follower of Christ,
I want to be one of his disciples.
I want to live in the newness of life,
Just let me be a follower of Christ.

What do I have to do?
What do I have to say?
How do I have to walk each and ev'ry day?
Tell me what does it cost if I carry the cross?
Just let me be a follower of Christ.

