

CELEBRATE EASTER

Fifth Sunday of Easter

**Serenity is the inner peace found in accepting the present moment,
releasing control and maintaining stillness amidst chaos.**

Acts 6:1-7

In this excerpt from the Acts of the Apostles, we see Seven men of virtue being chosen in prayerful discernment and being commissioned with restoring and maintaining harmony in the community. There was disharmony, disunity, and partiality in the community. The chosen seven were commissioned to reach out to those who were ignored in the community, the widows and the orphans, women and children – the less privileged and the most marginalized at that time. They were also commissioned to reach out to those outside the circles of the Jewish community, the Hellenists. There were four outstanding virtues which the community recognized in the seven chosen ones and which the community commissioned them to live out fully: Harmony, hospitality, justice, and compassion.

**What does this mean to you today as you reflect on your own call to discipleship?
How would you respond to this challenge? How would you participate in peacemaking;
justice keeping; nurturing harmony; and compassionate living?**

Psalm 33

The Psalmist calls us to sing a new and joyful song because God is always doing new and surprising things and God's word is faithfulness, loyal love, covenant love, steadfast love, unfailing love and it is everywhere! The Lord's eyes rest upon those with whom he has covenanted in love. Such is the wisdom of God. His covenant love is expressed in tender care of all he has created. His word is "Covenant Love", Unfailing, and steadfast love. What else to do but sing a joyful and new song!

**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.**

1 Peter 2:4-9

Peter invites his readers to turn to Jesus the living stone, rejected by men but accepted as precious in the sight of God. He challenges them and us today to be such living stones being built into a "spiritual house" – a community, not an isolated, individualistic, solitary religion. It is on the fidelity of the believers and their relationship to one another that the Church is built. It is

our connection to Jesus, the living corner stone and our concern for one another that creates and sustains the Church. Peter challenges us today to be rooted in Christ and growing in him and in our relationship to one another as a community of faith.

Be what you are called to be, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own” praising him who “called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

John 14:1-12

“Do not let your hearts be troubled...there are many dwelling places in my father’s house...I am the way, the truth and the life”

There is a story of a missionary who was lost in the African jungle. When, finally, he reached a primitive village, he asked one of the villagers to lead him out. After more than an hour of hacking their way through thick jungle growth, the missionary said to his guide: “Are you sure, this is the way? Where is the path? His guide responded, “Sir, in this place there is no path. I am the path.” This story takes us to the words of Christ: “I am the way, the truth and the life”.

The ultimate meaning of Christ’s life, death and resurrection was to reveal the God who...

- makes a way out of no way,
- brings triumph into tragedy,
- creates something new from old,
- generates light in darkness,
- brings victory into of defeat,
- generates hope where there is despair,
- brings good into evil,
- brings life into of death

“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father... I am in the Father and the Father is in me.....the man, who has faith in me will do the works I do and even greater than these...because it is the father who lives in me accomplishing his works...” Jesus says that the things he said and the things he did, did not come from himself, his own initiative, or his own power or his own knowledge, but from God. His word was God’s word, his work was God’s work, his power was God’s power, his life was God’s life...God came through in all that he was and in all that he said and in all he did.

In Jesus we meet God...God’s message, God’s mind, God’s heart... And in us, today, the world must meet all that is from God and of God.

Jesus said that the disciples would do what he did and even greater. We, the disciples of today must continue the mission of Jesus.

We must trust the promise of Jesus that it is God, the Father, doing His work in us, speaking His word through us and working out His plan through us.

Saint of the Day, May 3 - Saints Philip & James, Apostles and 12 other saints are remembered this day

We know nothing about James, Son of Alphaeus, except his name, and that Jesus chose him to be one of the 12 Apostles. He is not the James of Acts, son of Clopas, and later bishop of Jerusalem and the traditional author of the Letter of James. James, son of Alphaeus, is also known as James the Lesser to avoid confusing him with James the son of Zebedee, also an apostle and known as James the Greater.

Philip came from the same town as Peter and Andrew, Bethsaida in Galilee. He is specially remembered as the man who found Nathanael and told him of the "one about whom Moses wrote" (Jn 1:45). It took him a while to understand Jesus and his ways. On one occasion, Jesus asked Philip where they could buy bread for the people to eat (John 6). Philip's response was that two hundred days' wages would not be enough to provide even a little food for all. On another occasion (John 14) when Jesus was speaking about going to the father, Philip asked Jesus to "show us the Father" and that is all he wanted. Jesus' response was, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

It did take Philip and all the Apostles some time to understand Jesus and his ways. Philip and James call us to be patient, to recognize our imperfections in knowledge and experience and keep striving to know Jesus more and follow him more closely.

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