

CELEBRATE SBBATH

Sixth Sunday of Easter

**Simple people don't have the best of everything.
They just make the best of what they have.**

Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

The number of Christians continued to increase and many gentile converts joined the community. Some converted Pharisees demanded that the gentile converts follow the Mosaic Law. This created dissension in the early Church. Paul and Barnabas were delegated to consult the apostles and the elders on this matter.

The apostles and the elders came to the following decision regarding the Mosaic Law, "It is the decision of the Holy Spirit and ours too, not to lay on you any burden beyond that which is strictly necessary....." They sent representatives to the different communities with a letter announcing the decision and the people accepted it with delight. Great respect was paid to the apostles and the elders and their decisions.

Be docile to the Holy Spirit! Listen and be obedient to the Spirit's promptings!

Do not let your standards, plans and projects get in the way of the movement of the Holy Spirit!

Psalm 67

This Psalm was composed for public worship. It begins with the traditional Aaronic blessing from Numbers 6:24-25. It is a simple and beautiful prayer for God's blessing for all people, that all people and nations may know the salvation of our God; that all people and nations may shout for joy; that God may be known to the ends of the earth.

**May God have pity on us and bless us;
May he let his face shine upon us.
So may your way be known upon earth;
among all nations your salvation**

Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23

John had a marvelous vision of a transformed people, the New Jerusalem from God, of God, in God and with God. He saw continuity and universality of a people transformed by God. He saw a Church triumphant, glorious, attracting and welcoming all, continuous with the past and yet all new. He saw a people in whom God was present and not in the temple because there was no temple.

We are an Easter people....people transformed buy the death and resurrection of Jesus. Learn to live the new life to which you have been called.

John 14:23-29

There is much about love in this Gospel passage – Jesus and the Father, the disciples and Jesus, the disciples and other disciples – all in one communion of love and fellowship.

Obedience (keeping the word) is presented as the real sign of Love – faithfulness to the word of Jesus is faithfulness and obedience to the word of the Father.

Keep listening and be obedient to the word of Jesus. The word of Jesus is the word of the Father and it is the word of love.

This faithfulness to the word deepens the relationship of love. Fidelity not only maintains relationship, but also deepens it. Jesus promised that those who are faithful will experience the indwelling of God, that he and the father will make a dwelling place within. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, he said, would teach us all things and help us understand his teachings.

Fidelity, Obedience and loyalty are not values lived out in monasteries and religious houses. They are lived out where we are - where we live and work - where God has placed us. God is faithful where God is. We are called to be faithful where we are.

Jesus gave his disciples his farewell gift: PEACE. He said that this was not the kind of peace the world would give. It is enduring peace, lasting peace, eternal peace. The word for peace used in this context is “shalom” and shalom means “total well-being”, “the highest good”, “that which befits God”. It is not the absence or the end of war or conflict. It is the presence of shalom, even in the midst of tension. This is the kind of peace, shalom that Jesus experienced in loving and fulfilling the Father’s will.

Saint of the Day, May 22 - St. Rita of Cascia and 23 other saints are remembered this day.

Rita was born in 1386 in Roccaparena, Umbria, Italy. She was married at the age of 12 to a violent and ill-tempered husband. He was murdered 18 years later and she forgave his murderers, praying that her twin sons, who had sworn to avenge their father’s death may also forgive. She was granted this grace, and her sons, who died young, died reconciled to God.

After the death of her husband and sons, Rita tried to join the Augustinian nuns in Cascia. She was refused at first because she was a widow, but eventually allowed to enter the convent where she lived the last 40 years of her life in prayer, mortification and service to the people of Cascia. Rita was bedridden for the last four years of her life, consuming almost nothing except for the Eucharist. She died of tuberculosis at the age of 70 on May 22, 1456 and was canonized in 1900 by Pope Leo XIII.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

