

## Readings for the week of May 14, 2023

### Sunday:

Acts 8:5-8, 14-17/Ps 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20 (1)/1 Pt 3:15-18/Jn 14:15-21

### Monday:

Acts 16:11-15/Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b/Jn 15:26—16:4a

### Tuesday:

Acts 16:22-34/Ps 138:1-2ab, 2cde-3, 7c-8/Jn 16:5-11

### Wednesday:

Acts 17:15, 22—18:1/Ps 148:1-2, 11-12, 13, 14/Jn 16:12-15

### Thursday:

Acts 18:1-8/Ps 98:1-3ab, 3cd-4/Jn 16:16-20 *Ascension*: Acts 1:1-11/Ps 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9 (6)/Eph 1:17-23/Mt 28:16-20

### Friday:

Acts 18:9-18/Ps 47:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/Jn 16:20-23

### Saturday:

Acts 18:23-28/Ps 47:2-3, 8-9, 10/Jn 16:23b-28

### Next Sunday:

*Ascension*: Acts 1:1-11/Ps 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9 (6)/Eph 1:17-23/Mt 28:16-20

*Seventh Sunday of Easter*: Acts 1:12-14/Ps 27:1, 4, 7-8 (13)/1 Pt 4:13-16/Jn 17:1-11a



## Gospel Meditation

### Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

My dad was adopted as a baby. It's a big part of my family's story. His birth mother placed him in a Catholic orphanage not long after birth. A young couple longing for a baby strolled among the bassinets. My father, then only a few months old, looked at the husband and smiled. The man said, "That's my son." They took him home and the family grew. This moment of adoption was a wonderful truth they celebrated even when my dad was a young boy. They told him, "You're even more special than the other children, because we chose you to be our son." My dad's eyes well up with tears of gratitude whenever he tells the story, even eighty-three years later.

What is your story? Do we think or act like unwanted orphans? Who do we believe ourselves to be? As we continue to ponder Jesus' resurrection, we hear him say to us this Sunday, **"I will not leave you orphans."** God doesn't leave us alone like spiritual orphans. The power that raised Jesus from the dead is the Holy Spirit, who is also called the Spirit of Adoption. He chooses us to be His children, to share God's life forever. He gives us a future filled with hope. We are not orphans anymore! This Easter, that's the story we should share with others. It's the true story we are living right now.

— *Father John Muir*



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## ( PRACTICING ) CATHOLIC

### Weirdly Christian

For some time, I have worn a brown scapular. If you don't know much about this devotional practice, here is a very quick-and-dirty version, greatly lacking in detail: it's two little pieces of brown cloth, connected by a cord and worn around the neck beneath one's clothing. One of the cloth pieces depicts Our Lady of Mount Carmel appearing to St. Simon Stock, and the other piece — the one that is sometimes visible at the nape of my neck — depicts Our Lady's "scapular promise:" *Whosoever dies clothed in this Scapular shall not suffer eternal fire.*

This reflection is not about the brown scapular, but let me just quickly say that, while I believe the scapular promise, I do not view the scapular as a get-out-of-jail-free card, and neither does the Church. I don't wear it for the purpose of avoiding eternal fire. I wear it as a reminder to myself of my Marian consecration and as an act of humility and prayer.

I have sometimes cringed at the thought of how it looks to the person standing behind me in line at the coffee shop, should they happen to glimpse my scapular and read its brazen promise. We don't go in for talk of hellfire and salvation in polite society these days. I wonder if they think I'm a crazy person. I wonder if I should try to tuck the scapular back down below my collar.

Sometimes I do. But more often than not, I take a deep breath and decide that it's okay for me to feel self-conscious and trust that, if God wants to use this moment for His glory, he will — and if He doesn't, all I've lost is the esteem of others, which isn't worth that much to begin with.

I've always heard it said that if you do Christianity right, the rest of the world should think you're just a little bit weird.

*"...the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows him."* — John 14:17

*Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman*

## Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

### Question:

The Bible says that Jesus condemned gambling, but I notice that so many parishes have them at festivals and other events. What's correct?

### Answer:

Although Jesus speaks of our relationship with material wealth and the very human struggle with greed, the gospels do not include any specific instructions related to gambling. At the same time, the Church is very sensitive to the needs of those who might struggle with an addiction to gambling, and pastoral care should always be offered to those who struggle with this reality in their life.

While it is true that many parish or school communities include gambling or games of chance in festivals and fundraisers (e.g. bingo, roulette, ring tossing, dunking booths, etc.), there is nothing inherently wrong these sorts of events, given they are played fairly and within the limits of reason are not morally objectionable. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us: "Games of chance (card games, etc.) or wagers are not in themselves contrary to justice. They become morally unacceptable when they deprive someone of what is necessary to provide for his needs and those of others" (no. 2413).

As in all things, moderation and a sense of healthy limits should be applied to gambling and games of chance. For those who find themselves living with addiction to gambling, help is available in various 12-step and addiction recovery programs.