

Readings for the week of May 21, 2023

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

Monday:

Acts 19:1-8/Ps 68:2-3ab, 4-5acd, 6-7ab/Jn 16:29-33

Tuesday:

Acts 20:17-27/Ps 68:10-11, 20-21/Jn 17:1-11a

Wednesday:

Acts 20:28-38/Ps 68:29-30, 33-35a, 35bc-36ab/Jn 17:11b-19

Thursday:

Acts 22:30; 23:6-11/Ps 16:1-2a and 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11/Jn 17:20-26

Friday:

Acts 25:13b-21/Ps 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20ab/Jn 21:15-19

Saturday:

Morning: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31/Ps 11:4, 5 and 7/Jn 21:20-25

Next Sunday:

Vigil: Gn 11:1-9 or Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b or Ez 37:1-14 or Jl 3:1-5/Ps 104:1-2, 24, 35, 27-28, 29, 30 (see 30)/Rom 8:22-27/Jn 7:37-39

Extended Vigil: Gn 11:1-9/Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b/Ez 37:1-14/Jl 3:1-5/Ps 104:1-2, 24, 35, 27-28, 29, 30 (see 30)/Rom 8:22-27/Jn 7:37-39

Day: Acts 2:1-11/Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34 (see 30)/1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13/Jn 20:19-23

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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

Traditionally, the four writers of the Gospels are symbolized by four creatures that make their way into Church art and architecture: Matthew, an angel; Mark, a lion; Luke, an ox; and John, an eagle. These images can be found in churches across the world, a nod to those who recorded the stories of Jesus for us, thousands of years ago.

Today's Gospel was written by John. There are a few reasons why John is symbolized by an eagle, but my favorite explanation is that his writings soar like an eagle into the sky with their beautiful, poetic language. The prayer we hear today is no different — Jesus invokes God in a long discourse that might seem mystifying at times, the same way that a poem can be perplexing to understand when we are unfamiliar with the pacing or format.

Consider holding onto the shortest sentence in this prayer: "I pray for them."

Jesus prays for us. For me. For you.

Let that sink deep into your being.

Jesus is on your side. He is aware of what you are holding at this moment. He is aware of your pain, your faith, your mission. And He's rooting for you. This prayer was recorded thousands of years ago, far before you were born. Since before you were born, you were held in prayer. With that certainty, we live.

— *Father John Muir*

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Seeking Christ in One Another

The funeral luncheon, the Irish wake, the vigil at an ailing loved one's bedside: in times of crisis, people gather. In moments of sadness, fear, and confusion, we gravitate toward one another. For some reason, the feelings are so much more bearable when we are not alone.

I'm sure that the disciples and their companions, gathered in the upper room after the Lord's Ascension, did all of the things we typically do at these functions. I'm sure they hugged and talked and shared food, processing together the remarkable events they had witnessed.

But we don't hear about any of that. We hear only that they prayed — fervently, and together.

Saint John Paul II famously said that “it is Jesus that you seek when you dream of happiness; He is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you.” And I think that, whenever we gather, in good times or in bad, we think we are seeking companionship — but we are actually seeking God.

As I think back on the last few crisis-gatherings my family has had, I try to remember when we have stopped everything to pray together. I can think of a few times, but to be honest, they are too few. We are usually occupied with more practical tasks: planning the funeral, talking to the doctor, making the decisions, ordering the food. Just trying to survive through it.

But this is the busywork of sorrow, and it is a waste of our time. We would do better to follow the example of the disciples and remember that, in these dire moments, God is waiting for us.

*“Of you my heart speaks; you my glance seeks.” —
Psalm 27*

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

Why Does the Church Have Different Liturgical Cycles?

Answer:

While most Catholics know that the Church Year is divided into various seasons (e.g. Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time, etc.), many are unaware that the one Church Year is not like the one that follows. While the main seasons and feasts are the same from year to year, the 3-year cycle for Sundays and the 2-year cycle for weekdays means that, as a general rule, the readings in the Lectionary that we hear at Mass will change from year to year, helping us to have a richer encounter with Sacred Scripture. Each new cycle begins with the beginning of the liturgical year, the First Sunday of Advent.

The reasoning behind this innovation is outlined in Sacrosanctum Concilium, the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy” of the Second Vatican Council: “The treasures of the bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word. In this way a more representative portion of the holy scriptures will be read to the people in the course of a prescribed number of years” (no. 51). This was fully achieved in 1969 when the new cycles of readings were approved by Pope Saint Paul VI. To learn more about the Liturgy of the Word within the Mass, visit: www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/liturgy-of-the-word/index.cfm