

**Ante Communion Service: May 12, 2024**  
**Seventh Sunday of Easter**

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Celebrant:* Let us open our hearts and minds to the truth of our lives, and let us offer that truth to God.

*A moment of silence for self-reflection and confession.*

*People:* **Gracious God, source of all life, Lord of mercy and grace, hear our prayer.**

**You call us to a reconciled life, to a wholeness with each other, with you, and with your creation.**

**We come before you in love and trust, seeking healing of all that keeps us distant from you.**

**We pray that you will guide us in the footsteps of Christ, strengthen us, heal us, and that you will heal our world, so that we will be freed to serve and love and dream and be, as Christ calls us. Amen.**

Sisters and brothers in Christ, let us proclaim the Good News: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, reconciled, loved, and healed. **Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Let us pray together: **O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.**

**First Reading**

**Acts 1:15-17, 21-26**

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, "Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus-- for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry. So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us-- one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 1**

*Beatus vir qui non abiit*

1 Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, \*  
**nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!**

2 Their delight is in the law of the Lord, \*  
**and they meditate on his law day and night.**

3 They are like trees planted by streams of water,  
bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; \*  
**everything they do shall prosper.**

4 It is not so with the wicked; \*  
**they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, \*  
**nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.**

6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, \*  
**but the way of the wicked is doomed.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.**

**Second Reading**

**1 John 5:9-13**

If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel**

**John 17:6-19**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus prayed for his disciples, "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the

world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## **Sermon**

**Apostles' Creed**                      *said by all*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **Prayers of the People**

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church,  
those in need, and all of God's creation. In peace, we pray to you, Lord God. *Silence*

For this community, the nation, and the world;  
**For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

For the peace and unity of the world;  
**That a spirit of respect may grow among nations and peoples.**

For all who love and trust in God, that divisions may cease;  
**And that all may be one, as you and the Father are one.**

For the just and proper use of your creation;  
**That we may treat your creation with the love of the Creator.**

We honor and pray for our Indigenous neighbors.  
**That we may dwell together in respectful harmony.**

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;  
**For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.  
*Silence.* Hear us, Lord;                      **For your mercy is great.**

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. *Silence.*  
We will exalt you, O God our King;                      **And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. *Silence.*  
Lord, let your loving kindness be upon them.       **May they rest in your peace eternally.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.       **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray together:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, now and forever. Amen.**

We pray together for Christ's presence:

**My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the bread and wine.  
I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you.  
Amen.**

*Celebrant:* While we long to receive the sacrament of Christ's Body,

*People:*   **We become the sacrament of Christ's Body.**

*Celebrant:* Let your lives be manna to feed our hunger for communion.

*People:*   **The love we share becomes bread for the world.**

**Blessing** May Christ, the Son of God, be manifest in you, that your lives may be a light to the world;  
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be in you, among you,  
and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**Dismissal**     Go in peace and hope and joy to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia!  
                  **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!**