

Sixth Sunday of Easter

17 May 2020



Readings for this week:

Acts 8:5-8,14-17
1 Peter 3:15-18 or
4:13-16
John 14:15-21 or
17:1-11



Readings for
next Sunday

Acts 1:1-11
Ephesians 1:17-23
Matthew 28:16-20



Liturgical Jottings Liturgical Language II

After Rome adopted Latin into its liturgy, a century after most of the provinces of the Christian Roman Empire was using Latin. Latin now became the unifying language in commerce, government and public worship. At the same time other cultures in Mesopotamia, Upper Nile, Ethiopia, Armenia, Persia began using local languages in their public liturgies. This remained the norm until the 16th century when new vernacular languages were developing in Western Europe. Also the Protestant Reformers were calling for the vernacular in worship. The Counter Reformation, in the Council of Trent stated it was not opportune but permitted the vernacular languages for sermons, pastoral instructions and short explanations during the liturgy.

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Looking at the Readings

Peace and Persecution seem contradictory terms. Yet the Apostles and followers of Christ experienced both in the first years of the Church. We hear that after the persecution of Christians and after Saul's conversion, they were at peace (Acts 9). Then Saul, now called Paul, was himself, persecuted many times (2 Corinthians 11:23-27) but endured and even flourished by it all for the sake of Lord. Today's first reading records a "severe persecution" in which many Christians fled Jerusalem. However the flight from the city led them to other regions where they proclaimed Christ, healed in his name and received many into the faith. The new converts were baptised but waited for the Apostles to come to lay hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit. They endured the persecution with the love of the Lord in their hearts and the peace of God in their spirits.

What are the commandments that Jesus urges his disciples to keep? There are many instructions of Christ in the Gospel: turn away from sin, feed the hungry, be servants to others, proclaim the Good News, follow me, forgive, baptise, love your enemies, love one another. John in today's Gospel links keeping his commandments with remaining in his love. We are reminded: "I give you a new commandment, love one another just as I have loved you (John 13:34) and the greeting: "Peace be with you: and with your spirit!"

Good Idea for the Week

Monday 21 May is the UN International Day for Cultural Diversity promoting dialogue among cultures and peoples, based on mutual understanding, respect and the equal dignity of all cultures. They are essential prerequisites for constructing social cohesion, reconciliation among peoples and peace among nations.

Pope Francis Prayer Intention

During his Mass on Tuesday 12 May, International Nurses Day, Pope Francis prayed especially for nurses. Nursing is more than just a profession, it is a vocation, a calling that, especially in this time of pandemic, is marked by heroism – even to the point of giving one's life. He invited us to pray for nurses. In his homily, Pope Francis reflected on Jesus' words: "Peace I leave you; my peace I give you" (Jn 14:27). This peace is not "universal peace", the peace that comes from the absence of war, rather it is "peace in the heart, peace in our souls, the peace we all have within."

On the Lighter Side

When I went to get my flu vax the young nurse was very nervous; she told me that I was her very first patient. I said to her: "Give it your best shot."



	Those who are recently deceased and those who are grieving	
	For those whose anniversary occurs at this time	Jim Curtis, Lourdhu Mary Pasala
	Our sick and their carers	Sandy O'Sullivan, Dixon's Family Fr Ted Harte, Cecilia Bannan

God reigns through the Spirit

As we near the end of the Easter Season and approach Ascension and Pentecost, the liturgy contains a gospel reading that refers to the Holy Spirit. There is a promise of the coming of the Advocate, the Spirit of truth. There is a promise of the divine dwelling among us, the promise that the Spirit will be both *with* us, and *in* us.

The Advocate or the Paraclete is reflected in the various English translations of the noun *parakletos* for "comforter" or "counsellor". This noun derives from the Greek verb *parakaleo* which has many meanings including "to encourage", "to comfort and console" "to call upon for help" and "to appeal."

The Paraclete is not simply another name for the Spirit but is a way of describing the functions of the Spirit. What the Paraclete does is not new but is a continuation of the work of Jesus. God is present among the community of the faithful through the Spirit.

The coming of the Holy Spirit, therefore, crowns the promise of the divine presence. It is as though Jesus says, "Through the Holy Spirit I will be with you always. You will not be abandoned; you will not be orphans". The coming of the Paraclete ensures that the revelation of God in the incarnation does not end with Jesus' death and return to God. This Holy Spirit will continue Jesus' presence on earth.

In the face of their fear, anxieties, and despair, these promises are made directly to the disciples. Jesus assures them of new life and hope through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus offers his disciples the good news of the love of God and of the abiding presence of God with them, even when the circumstances of their lives seem most unpromising. Jesus speaks words of hope with the assurance of God's presence, so that the disciples can live a life shaped not by Jesus' absence, but by his unending presence.

God is always with us, and his presence will continue and grow despite our fears and distress. What Jesus promises provides endless resources for the life and faith of the church.

His promises give the church renewed strength and hope even when, we, as God's people, face the many difficulties and challenges of our day. Therefore, we shall not fear because we are in God's care, we are in the community of love and God is present in our midst.

The promises of divine presence are promises made, not to the individual, but to the community who lives in love. Those who live in love will experience God's presence in their midst. A relationship with God does not depend on physical presence, but on the presence of the love of God in the life of the community.

Notre Dame College's enrolments for prospective 2021 students are now open.

Prospectus, Enrolment Information and Applications for Enrolment are available from Sacred Heart School reception, Notre Dame College Knight Street Reception or via:
<https://www.notredame.vic.edu.au/our-college/enrolment-information>

For further information please email enrolments@notredame.vic.edu.au or phone the College on 5822 8400.

Bishop Barron's newest film series **The Sacraments** will be available in less than a week!

In the meantime you can watch **Episode 1** by going to this website:
<https://sacraments.wordonfire.org/episode-1-access>