

# Read

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 97:1-2, 6-7, 9

Revelation 22:12-14,  
16-17, 20

John 17:20-26

## LIVING THE WORD

### Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 29, 2022

#### REFLECTION

On this last Sunday of Easter, Jesus prays “that they may all be one” (John 17:20). This prayer, seemingly short and simple, is at the heart of our mission as Christian people. We are called to work to make Jesus’ prayer a reality: that one day, we may be a unified church striving to live out the Gospel mission together. What might a unified church look like?

Right now, baptized people practice many different Christian traditions, including: Roman Catholicism, Orthodox, Lutheran, Methodist, and more. While we all share a common faith in Jesus Christ and are united in Christ through our baptism, there are significant issues that divide these traditions, especially regarding church structure and sacraments. These cause tensions among Christians—and these tensions, though real and understandable, take our energy away from doing the work of the Gospel.

The process of learning with others and working toward Christian unity is called ecumenism. The hope is that one day, all baptized people can unite in the kingdom of God, bringing our particular gifts and talents in service to each other and God’s very self.

#### QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today’s readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What does Jesus’ prayer “that all may be one” mean for your life of Christian discipleship?
- ❖ What is one small way you can help the Christian church move toward greater unity?

#### ACTION

Have you ever learned about a different Christian tradition other than Roman Catholicism? Do you have any friends or classmates who go to a different worship service? Ask them about their experience. What commonalities do you share? What is different about your two traditions? What wisdom might you have to offer one another? If possible, consider attending a worship service or service project at their church to experience it for yourself.

**Learn about the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops efforts for better ecumenical dialogue among Christians:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOvu4aifl2A&list=PLpT\\_zvCOJa7DDoNWRtvfGrL\\_Oywlm\\_9PFF](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOvu4aifl2A&list=PLpT_zvCOJa7DDoNWRtvfGrL_Oywlm_9PFF)





May 29, 2022

# SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

## LECTIONARY #61C

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 97:1-2, 6-7, 9

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20

John 17:20-26

## Prepare for the Word

*The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.*

### Leader's Context

God created humankind in his own image and likeness. Sin damaged the relationship between God and humanity. Jesus came to earth and made his salvific act in order that the brokenness could be repaired. Through Christ, humankind was once again able to approach God in a mended relationship. Out of love for humanity, God desires to share heaven, his home, with us, his beloved creation. Jesus has prepared a place for us in this home. This tremendous love is clear in the salvific life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. We respond to this love by showing it to all people and creation.

**Q FOCUS:** *Heaven is God's home, and out of his love for us, he desires to share it with us.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week in our liturgical calendar we observe the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (May 31), when Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth to help her during her pregnancy. Mary's example of service and care is a model of Christian discipleship. On Wednesday we remember St. Justin Martyr who was a great theologian in the early Church and died for his faith. Thursday, we remember Sts. Marcellinus and Peter, who lived during the terrible persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian in the early Church. They also were martyred for their faith, yet persevered in its proclamation until the very end.

## Church Teaching Connection

"The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the holy Spirit, are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, that through all their christian activities they may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the marvels of him who has called them out of darkness into his wonderful light (see 1 Pet 2:4-10). . . . They should everywhere on earth bear witness to Christ and give an answer to everyone who asks a reason for their hope of eternal life (see 1 Pet 3:15)" (*Lumen gentium*, 10).

## Hear the Word

*Use this resource, a lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.*

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

### Gospel

John 17:20-26

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

*All make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.*

Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus prayed saying: "Holy Father, I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me. Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me,

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that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world also does not know you, but I know you, and they know that you sent me. I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them.”

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

Thousands of years before Jesus, the Book of Genesis was written. In ancient Genesis we find the beginning of the story between God and his human creation. In Genesis we learn that we are created by God and that he called us “good.” We learn that we were made to be with God, and that he loves us and wants us to be near him. We learn that God wants to share himself and his creation with us human beings. In Genesis we learn who we are and who God is, and the difference between the two. We also come to understand the break in these relationships that occurred with the first sin when human beings choose to turn away from God.

In the Gospel accounts we see how the gap between God and humankind was mended by the salvific life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We recognize Emmanuel, “God with us,” in the person Jesus, and we witness God’s saving mercy in him. By repairing this broken relationship, Jesus prepares us for our heavenly home.

► How would you describe heaven?

According to Catholic teaching, heaven is God’s home. God’s desire is to share his home with us. He wants us to be with him, and he wants us to be close to him. Jesus has prepared places in heaven for us, in joyful anticipation of our arrival there someday.

In his prayer in today’s Gospel reading, Jesus recognizes us as the Father’s gift to him. Consider that for a moment—the Creator of the entire universe gave his Son the gift of humanity; he gave his son the gift of you!

► How does this understanding (that humankind is God’s gift to Jesus) influence how you view others, especially those people who you don’t like?

We are God’s family; we are grafted onto the vine Israel through Jesus. What does it mean to be part of a family? Firstly, being a part of a family is belonging to a group that is bigger than just yourself. It’s being a member, a part of a group individuals who are bonded together. Secondly, being in a family means that you have love for the other members of the group, and you want to make certain they are loved, safe, and that they are well. As members of God’s family, we look to live a life of devotion and love to God and one another.

We are called to represent this family in all things that we say and do—all aspects of our lives are meant to reflect this important and beautiful identity. We are called to love one another, and put others needs before our own desires. We are called to love God with all our hearts.

► What does it mean to be in God’s family? How do you live out your identity as a member of God’s family?

## Wrapping It Up

*Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the “Church Teaching Connection” on page 196.*

**God created the world, and when he created human beings he said we were good.**

**Jesus came to mend the broken relationship between God and human beings.**

**God has prepared heaven for us, and he wishes to share heaven with us.**

# Act on the Word

## Part of God's Family

For this activity, you will need paper or journals and pens. You may also want to have reflection music and copies of the questions below.

At the beginning of today's Gospel reading, we hear of the intimate connection between the Father and the Son. We are invited to live in this love of God and to share it with others. Today's activity will help the teens reflect on what it means to be part of God's family and how that influences their interactions with others.

Write these reflection questions on the board or distribute them to the young people. You may want to provide quiet background music as the teens reflect.

- \* What does it mean for you, at this moment in your life, to be part of God's family? What does this look like spiritually, socially, and physically?
- \* What does it mean for your relationship with your family that they are also members of God's family?
- \* What does it mean for your relationship with your friends or classmates that they are also members of God's family?
- \* All people are made in the image and likeness of God—people we like, people we dislike, people

who have different religious beliefs, even people who do not believe in God. How does this knowledge shape your thoughts about and interactions with others?

## Closing Prayer

*God, our Creator,  
you are the source of all life  
and the parent of all creatures.*

*Accepting diversity is not easy.*

*It is not impossible, either.*

*Destroy whatever divides your people,  
and help us build bridges of dialogue and peace  
rather than walls of resentment and division,  
that the world may know your risen and  
ascended Son, Jesus Christ,*

*who makes us one with you through the*

*Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.*

*Amen.*

## For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.