

Read

Acts 1:15-17, 20a,
20c-26

Psalm 103:1-2, 11-12,
19-20

1 John 4:11-16

John 17:11b-19

LIVING THE WORD

Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 16, 2021



REFLECTION

It might seem rather strange to hear today's Gospel as we near the end of Easter Time. Jesus speaks of the evil one, and notes that his disciples are hated by the world. What could this possibly have to do with Easter? As Christians we yearn for the day when creation is fully restored to God's original vision. We wait for the time when all is right and just in the world, a time when there is no more pain, sadness, or injustice. We yearn to experience the life, love, and goodness of God in its absolute fullness. Jesus tells us he wants us to completely share his joy. Even amid this longing, however, we do experience the fullness of the goodness of God's created world every time we gather for liturgy. This realized eschatology, creation as it should be at the end of time, is the key to understanding the essence of Christianity.



ACTION

We are faced with a very negative outlook of the world if we immerse ourselves in the daily news cycle and ignore our Christian faith. This week, spend time reflecting on what our world would look like if we all took the Good News of Jesus to heart. You can write down your thoughts, draw them, or even write a song about it. Whatever you do, try to incorporate some concrete ways that you can make the Kingdom of God a reality: be kinder to your younger siblings, respect your parents and teachers, take care of God's creation by recycling or using biodegradable materials, etc. Then choose one action and do it this week. Pick another one to do next week. Keep doing this until you get in the habit of seeing the world through Christ's eyes.



"Hands and Feet"

— Audio Adrenaline

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFHyVdugFEM>



QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What are some concrete steps you can take to bring about the Kingdom of God?
- ❖ How do you see the Mass and the sacraments as pointing to the fullness of the Kingdom of God?



May 16, 2021

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

LECTIONARY #60B

Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26

Psalm 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20

1 John 4:11-16

John 17:11b-19

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

Jesus' prayer for his followers, which we hear in today's Gospel, demonstrates the depth of his divine love. He is so closely united with God the Father, that he knows his prayer on our behalf will be answered. Jesus prays to God to accept all those who follow Jesus, so that we may be one with him in the Body of Christ. Jesus is our Mediator, bridging the gap between humanity and God.

Q FOCUS: *Jesus prays for us. We are called to pray for others.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

On May 21, we celebrate St. Cristobal (also known as Christopher) Magallanes and Companions who were martyred in Mexico between 1915 and 1937 by an anti-Catholic Mexican government. Schools, churches, and seminaries were forced to close or risk penalties and death. Twenty-one priests and three were laypeople were murdered for secretly ministering to Catholics during this time. These modern-day martyrs remind us that the Christian faith can still be a dangerous one to profess in some parts of the world. Nevertheless, these martyrs placed their trust in God and received the courage to spread the Gospel and minister to those in need.

Church Teaching Connection

"The urgency of missionary activity derives from the radical newness of life brought by Christ and lived by his followers. This new life is a gift from God, and people are asked to accept and develop it, if they wish to realize the fullness of their vocation in conformity to Christ. The whole New Testament is a hymn to the new life of those who believe in Christ and live in his Church" (*Redemptoris missio*, 7).

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 17:11B-19

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, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one. When I was with them I protected them in your name that you gave me, and I guarded them, and none of them was lost except the son of destruction, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you. I speak this in the world so that they may share my joy completely. I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I

belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth."

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:

We believe that Jesus is our Mediator. He bridges the gap between humanity and God. He did this by becoming fully human, while remaining fully divine. He understands the struggles that human beings endure, but also knows the full peace of divine love because he is God the Son. We pray to Christ, to ask him for strength to face the challenges of this world. Today's Gospel reading shows us that even while he was on earth, Jesus prayed for his followers. He did not need to wait for the Ascension to be in God's presence. As part of the Trinity, Jesus acts in one accord with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, he can make the prayer he does in today's Gospel with confidence that the Father will hear and answer his prayer.

► **What does Jesus pray for on behalf of his disciples?**

Jesus asks for many things on behalf of his disciples. These were people that he had called by name, people who had been inspired by the Holy Spirit to recognize the truth of Jesus' identity, and people who were recipients of his healing and mercy. Jesus knew that the world would not always accept those who followed him, just as many people had not accepted Jesus himself. He asks the Father to protect his followers from evil, by helping them live in the light of God's truth and united in the joy of Jesus' love.

► **How does this prayer apply to us today?**

► **In what ways does God protect you and help you to live in his love?**

Jesus prays for these same things for us and all who follow him. He knew that those first disciples would spread his Gospel and the number of those who believed in him would grow. As Christians, we are called to be Christ to one another. When we remain in Christ, we are able to support others so that they remain in Christ in spite of sufferings or challenges they face. We share with them the love of God. We are set apart for this mission by our Baptism. We are sanctified so that we might minister to one another and bring the Good News of Jesus out to the world.

► **As members of the one Body of Christ, how are we called to live in this world, but not belong to it?**

Jesus began to build up the Kingdom of God on earth with his life, death, and Resurrection. While we will not reach that Kingdom fully until we are in heaven, we can help to transform this world we live in into the image of heaven. We can point others to God's Kingdom by following Jesus' example and living our lives for others.

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 192.

Look to heaven and pray to God the Father as Jesus did.

We are called to go forth in the world proclaiming the Gospel.

The Risen Lord is present among us and will give us the courage to bring the Good News to others so that we all will be one in him.

Act on the Word

Prayer Partners

You will need one large sheet of newsprint or butcher paper, markers, and small slips of paper. On each slip of paper, write down the name of one of the teens in your group.

Just as Jesus prays for us in today's Gospel, we are called to pray for one another. Invite the young people to spread out throughout your meeting space. Give each person a slip of paper with the name of another teen on it. Be sure to make a note of which teen was given which name so that you can repeat this activity at another time with different partners. Instruct the teens not to share whose name is on their paper. Rather, they should spend a few minutes

in silent prayer, lifting that person up to God. After a few minutes, invite the teens to come forward and write their prayer, or a part of it, on the large sheet of newsprint. Finish the activity by encouraging the teens to keep that person in their prayers this week. You can repeat this activity every week or at various times throughout the year. It is a good reminder to pray for others. The anonymity of this activity helps us to remember that others are praying for us, even if we don't know it.

Closing Prayer

*Lord God of power and might,
your Son Jesus consecrates us in truth
and teaches us to resist the entrapments
of our world.*

*Help us to live simple lives, fully devoted to you.
May we cast aside the material things of our world
that prevent us from truly appreciating the
great gift that is your love.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.