

**Church of the Divine Love**

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**MAY 7, 2023 10:15 A.M.**

**HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II**

Prayer before worship – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn -#

Opening Acclamation for Easter page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Acts 7:55-60**

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

Second Lesson: **1 Peter 2:2-10**

Gradual Hymn

Gospel: **John 14:1-14**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer B page 367

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal) page 367

Hymn during Consecration – on insert

The Lord’s Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn #

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace – on insert

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn #

Dismissal

### **Sermon Sunday May 7, 2023**

Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5,15-16; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14.

#### **Sisters and brothers in Christ,**

what troubles your heart today? For me the list is long and it’s not pretty. It’s a crushing and excruciating heart attack. I think about all the litanies and prayers we have offered in the last couple of years for the violence and suffering in the world: Syria; France and Turkey; Istanbul, Bangladesh, and Baghdad; Minnesota, and Dallas; America following the election; and persecuted religions. I think about the protests around the world and in America. I think about healthcare, immigrants, and refugees. I think about gun violence, racism, and poverty. I think about stories of bullying and suicides. I think about the nightmare of our political dysfunction in both parties. I think about those grieving and mourning the death of a loved one. I think about families that are struggling, spouses that are divorcing, children that

are hungry, and people that are hanging on by a thread. I think about my own sorrows, losses, and disappointments. I think about the ways today's gospel gets interpreted and used to exclude, condemn, and bludgeon.

Despite what Jesus says about not letting our hearts be troubled, my heart is troubled and I suspect yours might be too. What would you add to my list? What is troubling your heart today? None of us get through this life without a troubled heart. I don't think we can look at the pain of the world today, the suffering of a loved one, or our own wounds and hurts and not have a troubled heart. At least, I hope we can't. That's the context in which I hear Jesus say, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." It's not that different from the context in which Jesus said those words. It is the night of the last supper. Jesus has announced his departure from this world, his death. Feet have been washed. Judas has left the table and stepped into the nighttime of betrayal. Peter will break his silence with a threefold denial. Thomas is lost and asks, "How can we know the way?" Philip has lost his center and can't see what is right in front of him. "Lord, show us the father, and we will be satisfied," he says.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled," Jesus says. "Do not let your hearts be troubled?" Are you kidding me? Is Jesus really serious about that? Does he know what is happening in our lives and our world? How can Jesus say that with a straight face when he was troubled at seeing Mary and the Jews weeping at the death of Lazarus (John 11:33), when he said that his own "soul is troubled" (John 12:27), and when St. John tells us that Jesus "was troubled in spirit" (John 13:21)? What is Jesus telling us? It's not as if there is an on-off switch for troubled hearts. How do we begin to make sense of today's gospel in a world whose heart is constantly troubled? It's not hard to understand why this text is so often used in a burial liturgy. Death troubles our hearts and we want to find some balance, stability, and harmony. This text, however, is about more than the afterlife. It has something to say right here and right now. It's speaking to the very circumstances that trouble our hearts today.

Think about times when your heart has been troubled. Maybe it is now. What does that feel like? We all experience it in our own ways but see if this sounds familiar: isolated, paralyzed, overwhelmed, powerless, off balance, out of control, disconnected, afraid, thoughts spinning in your head, no stability, despair, grief, tears, anger. Do you recognize any of those? In the midst of a troubled heart the unspoken question is this: Will the center hold or is everything collapsing around us. Thomas and Philip are feeling the collapse. Much of the world is. Maybe you are too. Will the center hold? That's our question. "Do not let your hearts be troubled." Jesus recognizes that our hearts are troubled. He is not warning us about a future condition. He knows the troubling has already begun. He can see it in us because he's experienced it within himself. He also knows that our lives and the world are not defined by or limited to what troubles. What if not letting our hearts be troubled begins with looking into our hearts and seeing and naming what troubles? That means facing ourselves, our lives, our world. That may be the first and most difficult thing Jesus asks of us in today's gospel. I don't know about you but sometimes I don't want to see. I don't want to name. It's too difficult and too painful. It's takes me too

close to the edge of the abyss and a free fall into a collapsing life and a collapsing world. “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Thomas speaks for us all. We’ve lost our center. How do we recenter? Where do we go when it seems everything is collapsing around us?

Here’s the paradox. Sometimes we have to lose our center in order to find it. I want to be clear about this. I’m not suggesting that God purposely de-centers us. De-centering happens. It’s a part of life. It’s a part of the human condition. Sometimes it comes out of circumstances we didn’t create or choose. Other times it is a consequence of our choices or actions. Regardless, Jesus says that is not a place to stay or a way to live. It is not the life he lives or offer us. If your heart is troubled then it’s time to re-center. Re-centering doesn’t mean our hearts won’t be troubled. It doesn’t necessarily fix the problem, whatever it might be. It means that our lives are tethered to something greater than ourselves. It means that our hearts are held secure by the Divine Life and we are not free falling into the abyss. Jesus is reminding us that there is a center and it is not us. It is not America and her laws and constitution. It is not the church and her creeds and doctrines. It is not our success, accomplishments, position, or power. We do not have to be the center nor do we need to establish it. In fact, we can’t. Instead, we awaken to it. We already know the way to and the place of this center Jesus says.

“Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied,” Philip says to Jesus. He’s bought into the lie that the father is apart from, outside of, and distant from himself. The center, however, is within. The Father’s house is within. The kingdom is within. Wherever you go, there is the center. Whatever you face, there is the center. Whoever you are, there is the center, regardless of what troubles, there is the center. Wherever you are, there is the center. Not because you are the center, but because God is within. In the language of today’s gospel, the center is the father’s house and there are many dwelling places in this house. In the father’s house there is a dwelling place for every troubled heart. I am not talking about the afterlife, and I am not thinking of this as some sort of celestial dormitory for those who have enough right belief and right behavior. I am talking about the dwelling places as the ways God’s life intersects our own: mercy and forgiveness, justice, generosity, compassion, healing, love, beauty, wisdom, hope, courage, joy, intimacy. These are the dwelling places for troubled hearts, places of re-centering. Every time we live into and express the divine attributes in our way of being, with our words, or by our actions, we regain our center, restore balance, and take up residence in the father’s house.

If you have a troubled heart, ask God to give you a new perspective. Also ask him to give you patience so that you do not jump ahead and worry about a problem that may never come. But most important of all, ask God for more faith. Faith in God is the best remedy for all our problems. Jesus put it plainly, do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. **Amen.**

5 EASTER                                      10:15 AM                      HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II                      (also on zoom)

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

MONDAY                                      8:30 PM                      AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY                                      7:00 PM                      AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY                                      10AM-2PM                      THRIFT SHOP

8:30 PM                      AA MEETING

SATURDAY                                      10AM-2PM                      THRIFT SHOP

10:00 AM                      CLEAN-UP DAY

6 EASTER                                      10:15 AM                      HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II                      (also on zoom)

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Jess Berbeck	Deb Giordano
Coffee Hour	Jess Berbeck	Janet Croft

**SUMMER SCHEDULE – From June 4<sup>th</sup> until September 3<sup>rd</sup> the service will be held at 9:00 AM**

## PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Lourdes S.	Kaylee
Bob Curley	Arlene Goodenough	Art
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Bethany
Barbara Stinson	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Anthony
Mo (Rachael)	Phil Ryder	Carolyn
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Ciara	Robert Sweat	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Carol K.
Mary & Family	Christopher	Amy
Nathan Treadwell	Vincent	Tim
Judy	Celeste and Family	

All people and countries suffering from violence and hatred.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them. Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen

### Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,  
Lay my life before you,  
How I love you.

(Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus and third verse starting with Spirit.)

### Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions and glory, now and forever. Amen

