

Church of the Divine Love

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY

MAY 16, 2021

10:15 A.M.

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #460 – Alleluia! Sing to Jesus vs. 1-4

Opening Acclamation for Easter page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (S-280 in hymnal) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Psalm 1

Second Lesson: 1 John 5:9-13

Gradual Hymn #603 – When Christ was lifted from the earth

Gospel: John 17:6-19

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn – #214 – Hail the day that sees him rise v 1,2&4

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal) page 362

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread page 364

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn – #483

The head that once was crowned with thorns

Post Communion Prayer

page 365

Dismissal Hymn #495 – Hail! Thou once despised Jesus! v 1-3

Dismissal .

Sermon Sunday May 16, 2021

Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26; Psalm 1; I John 5: 9-13; John 17: 6-19

Dear people of God,

Today's gospel is a part of what is known as the farewell discourse. It is the night of the last supper. Jesus washes the feet of his disciples and then he begins a long monologue about leaving and his impending death. He talks a lot and for a long time; four chapters and 117 verses worth of talking. He talks about what it all means and what it will be like for the disciples. But we also get some hints about what is going on within Jesus.

We live in a dangerous world. I'm not telling you anything you don't already know. We read about the dangers of this world every day. We see the pictures on the internet and the daily news. Some of you have experienced firsthand the dangers of life. The human instinct to danger is fight or flight. Neither one, however, really changes the situation. One adds to violence and increases the danger. Someone will get hurt; life will be lost. The other creates and opens a space and a place for the danger to exist. Again, someone will get hurt, life will be lost. The events and circumstances that we perceive as dangerous are real, but they just point to deeper issues. They are symptoms of what is going on within the human heart. They reveal the wounds and brokenness that often stand in opposition to the life, love, and ways of God. This opposition is what St. John means by "the world."

John is not talking about the created order, nature. That was created good and remains so. The world refers to the many different operating systems that we use, and have come to accept as normal, to order human life: our social, cultural, political, and economic structures. Far too often those systems both arise from and create fear, anger, division, injustice, and greed. That is the world into which Jesus sent his disciples and it remains the world in which we live and practice our faith.

Jesus knows that the human ordering of life is often contrary and even opposed to God's ordering of life. That concern is the subject of his prayer in today's gospel. It is the evening of the last supper. Feet have been washed. Supper is ended. The betrayer has left, and it is night. The darkness has descended: the darkness of Jesus' impending death, the darkness of not knowing the way, and the darkness of the world. Jesus neither runs from nor fights the danger of the world. He offers a different way. He loves and prays. He lays down his life in love. He prays for us, the ones who will continue his life and work in the world. We live in the world, but we do not belong to it. We belong to Jesus and the Father.

The great danger for us is that the darkness will invade, fill, and overtake our hearts. We either give up or buy in to business as usual. You hear that in phrases like, what can I do? I am only one person or That is just how it is. It's always been like that. Jesus' prayer, however, suggests that is not how it is intended to be, and it does not have to continue that way. Jesus prays that his joy may be made complete in us. This happens during the world and its dangers. It is neither running away from the systems of the world nor standing up to them but laying down life before them in witness to Christ's love. That is not easy to do. Jesus does not pray that it would be easy or that we would be taken out of the world. Instead, he prays for our protection in the world.

Our protection is not found in escaping or avoiding the danger. The protection Jesus asks for us comes through sanctification. "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth," Jesus prays. Sanctification separates us from the usual operating systems of the world. We neither give up nor buy in. Instead, our lives are transformed. We live according to and reveal God's system for the world: things like love, mercy, forgiveness, beauty, wisdom, generosity. Our protection is in being made holy and wholly God's. That is what keeps us safe during the conflict.

The ascension completed the work God gave his Son. When Jesus returned to the Father his work of rescuing and redeeming us was complete. Salvation is a done deal for all those who believe that Jesus is who he says he is, and we are in him. Forgiveness is past tense. The ransom has been paid. Hope is restored. God's plan to bring us back into relationship with himself was enacted. Because Jesus ascended, we have access to the throne of God, to the very presence of the Father, who loves us and desires to be in intimate relationship with us. We can only imagine what the disciples thought as they listened to this prayer. We can only imagine how many times the words of this prayer came back to encourage them in the years ahead. What we do know is the words of this prayer were answered at the ascension. God's greatest joy is to be one with his children. The ascension brought about that joy.

It is not enough to just hear Jesus' prayer. His words ask that we live, act, and work with God in answering his prayer. We are to actively participate in Jesus' prayer by shaping our life to be increasingly like his. So, while we might give an amen to Jesus' prayer we must also examine our own hearts and ask ourselves some hard questions. The real issue is not about what is out there in the world but about what is in here, in our hearts. What is our hearts' orientation? How do we benefit from, participate in, and foster the systems of the world that oppose God's life? Are we willing to change? Do we operate out of our wounds and brokenness: resentments, the need to win, looking out for number one, living with an attitude of scarcity, prejudice, fear, self-condemnation, or hatred? To the degree we do, we deny God our life and contribute to the darkness of the world. That is not God's desire or hope for our lives or the world.

You, I, and all humanity are worth so much more than that. Jesus' own life and prayer declare that. We are the gift he and his Father share and exchange between themselves. Jesus entrusts us to his Father's protection even as he entrusted himself to the Father. To do anything less denies us God's sanctification, our protection. "Holy Father, protect them," Jesus prays. In large part the answer to Jesus' prayer rests in our hands, and our hearts.

Let us offer forgiveness rather than retribution, mercy instead of condemnation, and compassion rather than indifference. Lay down your life in love for another. See life through the lens of beauty and not cynicism. Choose unity over individualism and God's ways over personal agendas. In those moments you are the amen to Jesus' prayer, your heart is healed, and the world is different. **AMEN!**

7 EASTER/SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY

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

MONDAY

8:00 AM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY

7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY

10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

8:00 PM AA MEETING

SATURDAY

10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

THE DAY OF PENTECOST/WHITSUNDAY

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

11:15 AM VESTRY MEETING
(also on zoom)

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

SAVE THE DATE

OUTDOOR THRIFT SHOP SALE

10AM-2PM SATURDAY, JUNE 12TH

Prayer for Grace and Favor :

Dear God, we ask that you provide for our needs, we ask for your grace and favor. We pray for your blessings to cover us; we pray that you would help us to prosper and make every plan that you have birthed in our heart to succeed.

We pray that others would take notice of your goodness and could not help but say, "these are the ones that the Lord has blessed." Shine your light in us, through us. May we make a difference in this world, for your glory and purposes. Set your way before us. May all your plans succeed. We may reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing. In Jesus Name, Amen.

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Barbara Curran	Girard Bishop
Arlene Goodenough	Margaret
Frances & Donna Mongelli	Bernie Walther
Nathan Treadwell	Irene
Tyler Gorman	Kim
Chris Dickson	Rachael
Michael Echevarria	Warren
Andy	Bill Conklin
Michael & Family	Anthony Paribello
Martinisi Family	Edward Lent
Lois Kessler	Kate Jones
Kathleen	Del

Children who are ill:

Christopher and his family	
Franklin Tenesaca	Ciara
Aidan	Gabriel