

Church of the Divine Love

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 25, 2025 10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

A Morning Prayer – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Gloria page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Acts 16:9-15**

Psalm 67

Second Lesson: **Revelation 21:10, 22 - 22:5**

Gradual Hymn #

Gospel: **John 14:23-29**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Confession page 393

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)

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 for the Parish page 817

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn #

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday May 25, 2025

Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5; John 5: 1-9

Esteemed Sisters and brothers in Christ, where are you stuck in your life today? I think we all have times in our lives when we feel stuck. The man in today's gospel (**John 5:1-9**) is stuck. For thirty-eight years he has been sitting on his mat. That's a long time. Every day is the same. He sits on his mat. He waits and watches for the water in the pool to be stirred up.

There was a belief that this pool of water called Bethzatha had healing properties and that it could change one's life. It was said that every now and then an angel would stir the water, the water would begin to bubble, and the first one to get in the water would be healed. The man in today's gospel won't move until he sees the first bubble. He is living an "as soon as" life. He's unable to see that the deep well of life is within him. He's convinced that life will bubble up outside of him, over there, in that magic pool of water. And we all have our Bethzatha, our magic pool of water. For thirty-eight years this man has

been saying to himself, "As soon as the water bubbles I will get up off my mat. As soon as I get to the water my life will be better. As soon as I get into the water my problems will be fixed." I've said that, haven't you? That is not, however, the life Jesus offers. The life Jesus offers does not happen as soon as. It happens in this place, at this time, in these circumstances, here and now.

I don't know what this man's illness is but I've experienced it in my life and I'll bet you have too. My guess is that every one of us could tell a story about when we were stuck. That's about more than a physical illness or condition. It's a spiritual condition, a dis-ease of the soul, a soul sickness. Sometimes it feels like our life in general is stuck. Other times it's more specific. We come to a stuck place concerning a decision or we find a stub place in particular circumstances such as our marriage, relationships, parenting, work, a sense of calling or a dream for our life, a deep longing or desire, faith and spirituality. When I am stuck there's no movement in my life. I'm not getting anywhere. I do, think, and believe the same old things. I listen to the same old voices within me. I repeat old patterns and behaviors and then wonder why nothing is changing. I let my past, what has happened to me, or what I've done and left undone define me. I identify with my wounds, grief, and losses. They aren't just things that have happened to me, they are who I am. Out of fear or anxiety I frequently choose to remain with what is safe, familiar, and predictable rather than risk the uncertainty of something new. I often don't take responsibility for myself and my life. I convince myself that other people or circumstances are why I'm stuck. If they would just change, I'd be better. When I am stuck, I live an "as-soon-as" life. Most of us know what that's like. We say to ourselves or maybe even out loud to another, "As soon as this or that happens everything will be better. I'll be happy. My problems will go away. I'll be satisfied. All will be well."

Sometimes we have to ask ourselves what using our life? One thing we know about life, it is always changing. Sometimes things go up and sometimes things go down, sometimes things go well, sometimes they don't, sometimes you are happy and sometimes you are sad, that's thing call life and we begin to understand, to accept that reality. We are going to have some ups and some downs, but during those down moments, that's where the growth takes place, that's where the work is. Anybody can feel good when they have their health, happy relationship, the children are acting normal, business is successful, anybody can be positive then, anybody can have a larger vision, anybody can have faith in those kinds of circumstances, but the real challenge of growth, mentally, emotionally, spiritually come when you get nut down. Someone says adversity introduces a man to himself. That's where the growth takes place. We all have story; life is not fair. When I am stuck the waters of my life are stagnant. Nothing is bubbling up for me. My world is no larger than the mat on which I sit, and I live with the illusion that there is some magic pool of water out there. And "as soon as" I get to it, then....

I'm not suggesting that the circumstances of our lives are irrelevant or have no effect. That's just not true. They do affect us. But what if we dealt with ourselves before dealing with the circumstances?

When we talk about our stuck places, we're really just describing the symptoms of something that is going on within us. What's going on within you when you are stuck? What if the stuck places in our lives are pointing to and showing us something about how we see and relate to our ourselves and our lives; our patterns, thoughts, and beliefs; and aren't simply circumstances to escape or get away from? Jesus does not help the man get into the water. He comes to him on his mat, the same mat and situation the man has for so long wanted to escape, and speaks words of life and resurrection. "Stand up, take your mat and walk."

If this man is going to do that, if he is going to stand up, take his mat, and walk, he will have to let go of Bethzatha, the magic pool of water, and begin to re-image himself as larger than his history. He will have to reimagine himself as more than what has happened to him or what he has done and left undone. He will have to see himself as larger and more than the past thirty-eight years. And he will have to do it over and over again, as do you and I. Where are you stuck today? You got it? You know what it is? There's only one thing left to do. "Stand up, take your mat and walk." That's Jesus' call to each of us, to say to ourselves, I am not what has happened to me; I am what I choose to become. I am not my roles; I am my journey. I am not my limiting experience; I am the creative power of my potential. Jesus does not help the man get into the water. He comes to him on his mat, the same mat and situation the man so wants to escape, and speaks words of life and resurrection. "Stand up, take your mat and walk." The man does not leave his mat behind. It goes with him. His circumstances are real. The difference is he now carries them. They no longer carry him.

Jesus doesn't change our outer circumstances. He changes us. He calls us into a new way of being, seeing, acting, speaking, thinking. When we stand and rise to that new life, we discover the circumstances have somehow changed. That doesn't necessarily make life easy or mean we no longer have to deal with the circumstances of life. It makes our circumstances more manageable and we engage them from a different place and position. The pool of Beth-zatha is drained of its power over us. There is freedom where there was once imprisonment. Inertia gives way to creativity. Once stagnant waters now bubble with new life.

The life Jesus offers does not happen "as soon as" It happens in this place, at this time, in these circumstances. Are you sitting on your mat? Are you looking for a pool of Bethzatha? "Stand up, take your mat and walk." **Amen.**

All baptized Christians, regardless of age, are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church.

6 EASTER	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST,, RITE II
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
MONDAY	8:00 PM	AA MEETING
TUESDAY	7:00 PM	BIBLE STUDY
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP

7 EASTER/THE SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY

9:00 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
	COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Dana Kenn
Coffee Hour	Prossers	Giordanos

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

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:

Barbara Curran	Betty Curley	Jess
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Art
Chris Dickson	John Roccoo	Deb P.
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Bobby
Manetta Family	Robert Hosey	Ryan
Sister Eddie	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Jonathan	Del
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Vincent & Barbara	Ciara
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Sophia
Michael & Family	Kristen	Mo
Michelle & Baby	Christopher	Annie
Timothy Treasure	Shannon & Family	Donna A.
Moises Parra	Misael Varas	Joseph

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.

The homeless and food insecure.

Help us to speak word of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.

Bring us, with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

A Morning Prayer

Father in heaven, I stand ready to receive Your wisdom and guidance. In each decision, big or small, lead me to discern your will and to act accordingly. Help me to understand the depth of Your wisdom, finding guidance in Your word and through prayer. Teach me to be patient as I wait for Your direction, trusting that Your timing is perfect. May I navigate this day with the assurance that Your wisdom is a treasure far greater than any earthly knowledge. Guide my thoughts and actions, that they may be a reflection of Your discernment and love. In Your guidance, I find the path to a life of purpose and peace.

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 for ever. Amen

