

The Living Word

Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year A

7 May 2023

First Reading Acts 6:1-7

They elected seven men filled with the Spirit and wisdom.

About this time, when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenists made a complaint against the Hebrews: in the daily distribution their own widows were being overlooked. So the Twelve called a full meeting of the disciples and addressed them, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the word of God so as to give out food; you, brothers, must select from among yourselves seven men of good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom; we will hand over this duty to them, and continue to devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the word.' The whole assembly approved of this proposal and elected Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

The word of the Lord continued to spread: the number of disciples in Jerusalem was greatly increased, and a large group of priests made their submission to the faith.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 32:1-2. 4-5. 18-19. R. v.22

**(R.) Lord, let your mercy be on us,
as we place our trust in you.**

or

(R.) Alleluia.

1. Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just;
for praise is fitting for loyal hearts.
Give thanks to the Lord upon the harp,
with a ten-stringed lute sing him songs. (R.)
2. For the word of the Lord is faithful
and all his works to be trusted.
The Lord loves justice and right
and fills the earth with his love. (R.)
3. The Lord looks on those who revere him,
on those who hope in his love,
to rescue their souls from death,
to keep them alive in famine. (R.)

Second Reading 1 Pt 2:4-9

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood.

The Lord is the living stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him; set yourselves close to him so that you too, the holy priesthood that offers the spiritual sacrifices which Jesus Christ has made acceptable to God, may be living stones making a spiritual house. As scripture says: See how I lay in Zion a precious cornerstone that I have chosen and the man who rests his trust on it will not be disappointed. That means that for you who are believers, it is precious; but for unbelievers, the stone rejected by the builders has proved to be the keystone, a stone to stumble over, a rock to bring men down. They stumble over it because they do not believe in the word; it was the fate in store for them.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 14:6

Alleluia, alleluia!

**I am the way, the truth, and the life, says
the Lord;**

**no one comes to the Father, except
through me.**

Alleluia!

Gospel Jn 14:1-12

I am the way, the truth, and the life.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Trust in God still, and trust in me.
There are many rooms in my Father's house;
if there were not, I should have told you.
I am now going to prepare a place for you,
and after I have gone and prepared you a place,
I shall return to take you with me;
so that where I am
you may be too.
You know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said:

'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.
No one can come to the Father except through me.
If you know me, you know my Father too.
From this moment you know him and have seen him.'

Philip said, 'Lord, let us see the Father and then we shall be satisfied.' 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip,' said Jesus to him 'and you still do not know me?

'To have seen me is to have seen the Father,
so how can you say, "Let us see the Father"?
Do you not believe
that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?
The words I say to you I do not speak as from
myself:
it is the Father, living in me, who is doing this work.
You must believe me when I say
that I am in the Father and the Father is in me;
believe it on the evidence of this work, if for no
other reason.
'I tell you most solemnly,
whoever believes in me
will perform the same works as I do myself,
he will perform even greater works,
because I am going to the Father.'

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Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

The disciples are full of premonitions that their beloved leader was about to be cruelly done to death, leaving them abandoned. Yet he tells them: 'Let not your hearts be troubled.'

Why shouldn't their hearts, our hearts, be troubled by the disappearance of Our Lord's physical presence? The answer is because there is a purpose to his passage through death. It was to bring about a situation where our Risen Lord could share his life in ever more intimate fashion with his followers.

How does this come about?

At every Mass, after the gifts are brought to the altar, I pour a little water into the chalice of wine, saying: 'By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to *share* in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to *share* in our humanity.'

What a powerful verb! By grace, we can participate in the Divine Life of the Risen Lord.

As the Greek saints of the early church used to say in very daring fashion: 'God became human so that humans might become God.'

We anticipate this at every Holy Communion when, as Pope John Paul II used to say: 'We digest, as it were, the secret of the Resurrection.'

We could pause for a moment after Communion to reverence the Divine Life dwelling in us, a truly Holy Communion!

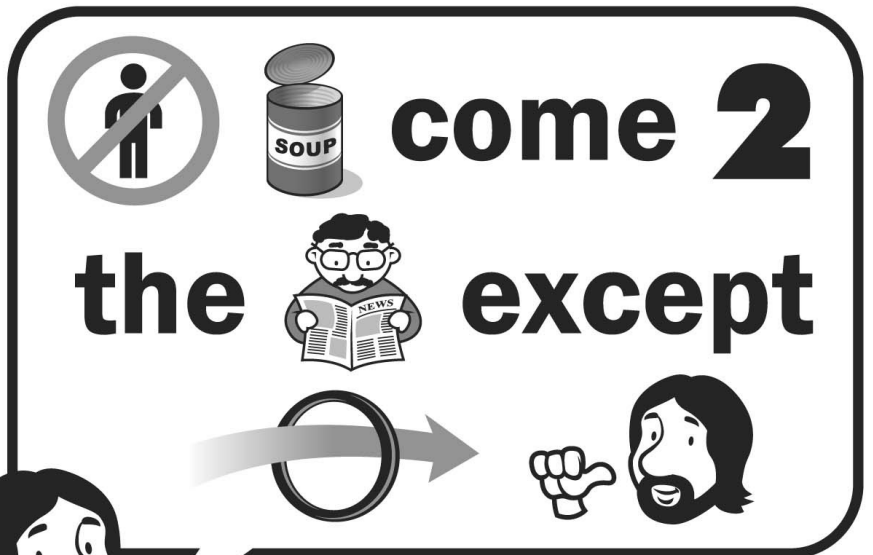
Alleluia!

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In the small Portuguese village of Fatima, the Blessed Virgin Mary is said to have appeared to three shepherd children. On six occasions between May and October, 1917, Our Lady appeared to Lucia dos Santos and her two cousins, Francisco and Jacinta Marto. According to an account of the events given by Lucia, Mary entrusted the children with three secrets and encouraged them to do acts of penance and say the rosary every day. Thousands of people came to Fatima upon hearing of the visions, and on October 13, some 70,000 people reportedly witnessed a miraculous solar event. Fatima is now a major site of Marian pilgrimage.

Can you decipher what Jesus is saying?



" _____ come
 _____ the _____
 except _____ ."

Crossword

Across

- 2: the opposite of false
- 5: belief
- 6: Jesus said 'I am the _____, the truth and the life'
- 7: a building people where people live
- 8: accept the truth
- 10: a house is made of several of these

Down

- 1: this man wanted Jesus to show them the Father
- 2: something that is true
- 3: to get ready
- 4: concerned
- 5: daughter is to mother, as son is to _____
- 9: the opposite of death

