

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



Living Stones

Almighty God, master builder,
your Son is the foundation of our lives.
If the world seems to crumble and fall,
keep us anchored in faith, hope, and love.
Smooth and polish our hearts
until they gleam
and radiate your glory dwelling within us.
Build us up in holiness,

and fit us together so securely
that evil cannot fracture us
nor pain and death break us.
Fashion others into living stones, too,
until all people are part of your
house forever.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, May 10, 2020

Dwelling

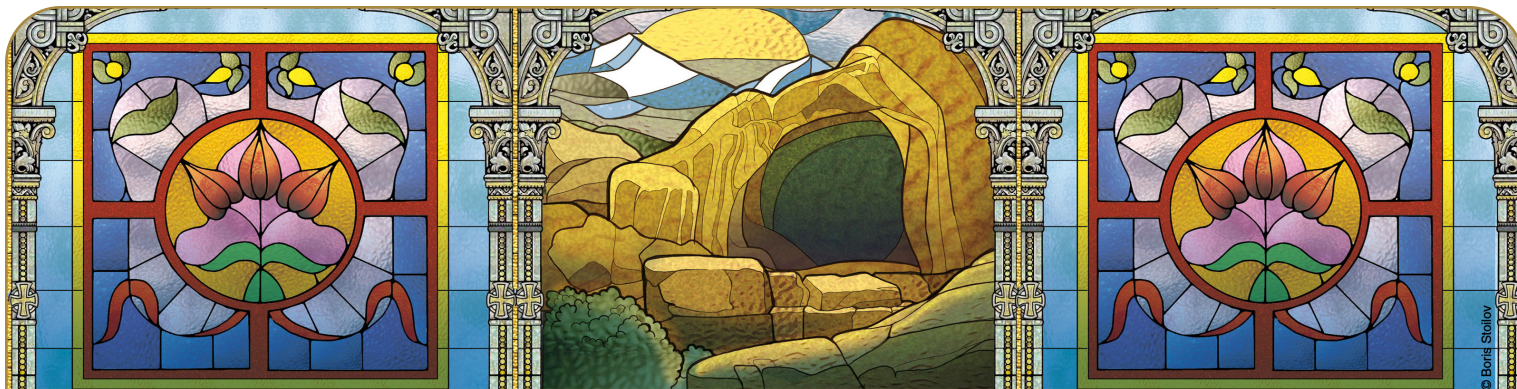


Today's Readings: Acts 6:1–7; Psalm 33:1–2, 4–5, 18–19 (22); 1 Peter 2:4–9; John 14:1–12. Although God was understood to dwell in the Jerusalem Temple, that stone structure was a sign that God dwelled among his people, his “royal priesthood” and “holy nation.” As Jesus explained to his disciples, he fully reveals God’s presence and is the means by which people enter that presence. As God’s Son, Jesus is God’s place of dwelling and the one through whom we will dwell with God forever.

Jesus also tells us that there is endless space in his Father’s house. Jesus, the foundation of a living and eternal temple, has room for everyone to build their lives upon him. This living, growing dwelling place is so vast that it is ulti-

mately unavoidable: those who want to go around it can’t. There is no avoiding God’s presence, no hiding from his wonderful light.

As people build themselves on Christ, there’s the danger that parts of this structure will weaken. In the reading from Acts, we hear that some members of the community were not receiving the material assistance they needed. Once the problem was pointed out, however, the Apostles acted quickly. They not only ensured that help was given, they shared their Christ-given authority with others to prevent such problems from happening again. We must do the same. By showing others that Christ dwells among us, we will help them—and us—to dwell with Christ forever.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, May 11

The Best of Intentions

The people who worship Paul and Barnabas recognize that something wonderful has happened, but their faith is misdirected. They need instruction on how to interpret and respond to the healing they witnessed. They need the Advocate, who will teach and guide them. This Advocate, the Holy Spirit, continues to guide the Church to this day. Ask God for the Spirit's help in discerning where and how God is acting and how you can best respond. *Today's Readings: Acts 14:5–18; Psalm 115:1–2, 3–4, 15–16; John 14:21–26.*

Tuesday, May 12

Eternal Peace

Jesus offers a peace that no suffering or hardship can take away from us. His peace rises from God's salvation: we who believe in our Lord's triumph over sin and death no longer have anything to fear. St. Paul demonstrated confidence in this gift of peace when he resumes his mission right after nearly being killed for preaching the Gospel. Pray that whatever happens in your life, your faith in God's gift of peace may remain unassailable. *Today's Readings: Acts 14:19–28; Psalm 145:10–11, 12–13ab, 21; John 14:27–31a.*

Wednesday, May 13

Bearing Fruit

The first serious challenge to the unity of the Church was the question of whether Gentile converts had to obey the Jewish law. Since Jesus was Jewish, some people thought that those who believed in him must also become Jewish. Although the Church concluded that Christians did not also have to become Jews, we follow laws, such as the Ten Commandments that were given to the Jews. By obeying such laws we bear fruit, which Jesus, our true vine, commands us to do. What can you do to show you are bearing fruit? *Today's Readings: Acts 15:1–6; Psalm 122:1–2, 3–4ab, 4cd–5; John 15:1–8.*

Thursday, May 14

St. Matthias, Apostle

Jesus reminds his disciples that he chose them; they did not choose him. This remains true when the disciples choose an Apostle to replace Judas. After narrowing the list of candidates, the disciples cast lots as a way of inviting God to choose between the two men. Do we readily invite God into our decision-making? Do we pray with the Scriptures and consult people who are faithful and wise? Do we open our hearts to God for a clear look at our motivations? *Today's Readings: Acts 1:15–17, 20–26; Psalm 113:1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8; John 15:9–17.*

Friday, May 15

Love One Another

Jesus tells us to “love one another,” but how exactly do we do that? One example is the way the Church dealt with the question of whether Gentile converts to Christianity had to become Jews. The Apostles wanted to ensure that both groups could come together for ritual meals in which they worshipped Christ. By resolving the dispute in a way that acknowledged the concerns of both parties, the Apostles brought more people into the peace and friendship of Christ. In what specific way can you fulfill Christ's commandment to love? *Today's Readings: Acts 15:22–31; Psalm 57:8–9, 10 and 12; John 15:12–17.*

Saturday, May 16

Respect

It seems hypocritical for Paul to have Timothy circumcised when he previously said that Gentiles did not need to be. What Paul understands, however, is that Timothy, whose mother is Jewish, must honor his Jewish heritage. By upholding Jewish practices, Paul and Timothy also show their fellow Jews the continuity between Judaism and faith in Christ. Try to learn something more about Judaism today. *Today's Readings: Acts 16:1–10; Psalm 100:1b–2, 3, 5; John 15:18–21.*

