

The Collect and Readings for The Fifth Sunday of Easter

The Collect

Almighty God,
who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
have overcome death and opened to us
the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going before us
you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help
we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

Prayer after Communion

Eternal God,
whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life:
grant us to walk in his way,
to rejoice in his truth,
and to share his risen life;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Today's Readings

First Reading Acts 8:26-40

Philip's willingness to proclaim the Gospel wherever he is sent leads to an opportune encounter and the conversion of a traveller along a wilderness road.

Second Reading 1 John 4:7-21

John enjoins Christians to express the reality of God's indwelling spirit by living a life of mutual love that flows from God as its source.

Gospel John 15:1-8

Using the image of the vine, Jesus teaches that fruitful discipleship is only possible through staying closely connected to Christ.

First Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' ³¹He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.'

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Psalm 22.24–30

²⁴ My praise is of him in the great assembly, I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him. ²⁵ The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord shall praise him: 'May your heart live for ever!'

²⁶ All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow before him. ²⁷ For kingship belongs to the Lord; he rules over the nations.

²⁸ To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; all who go down to the dust fall before him. ²⁹ My soul shall live for him; my descendants shall serve him; they shall be known as the Lord's for ever. ³⁰ They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn the saving deeds that he has done.

All the ends of the earth shall turn to you, O Lord.

Second Reading

A reading from the first letter of John

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, 'I love God,' and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Gospel Reading

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the first and the last, says the Lord, and the living one;
I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples: ¹I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.