



LIVING THE GOSPEL

**Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 10, 2026**

Theme: "I will not leave you orphans."

Gathering Prayer

Facilitator: Grant, almighty God, that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy, which we keep in honor of the risen Lord, and that what we relive in remembrance we may always hold to in what we do. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Exploring the Word

Gospel Reading: John 14:15-21

Jesus said to his disciples: ¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever, ¹⁷ that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he is with you, he is in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you orphans; I will come back to you.

¹⁹ In a short time the world will no longer see me; but you will see me, because I live and you will live. ²⁰ On that day you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you. ²¹ Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

Gospel Focus

As we near the end of the Easter season, the readings continue to paint us with increasing directness toward the eventuality of the ascension. Announcing his impending departure from his earthly life, Jesus promises the apostles at the Last Supper the gift of the Holy Spirit, whom the world "neither sees nor knows." With this almost cryptic language, Jesus tells them that he will continue to be with them in a new way—he will live and they will live. Jesus reassures the apostles that he will not leave them alone, but will send the Holy Spirit to be with them. In fact, they will be closer to Jesus than before—Jesus' ascension to the Father brings out our human nature into the trinitarian communion of love that is God. Rather than left as orphans, we are adopted as sons and daughters. The Spirit will breathe God's life into the apostles at Pentecost, and today brings us into communion as church.

Gospel Reflection

In this Sunday's gospel, which is part of Jesus' farewell discourse, he assures his disciples that he will not leave them orphaned. His impending departure will not leave them bereft of his love. They will not be homeless and will not need to be cared for by strangers. He promises to send another "Advocate" to be with them always. The Greek word *parakletos*, "paraclete," has a rich array of nuances. It literally means "called to the side" of another. It can have a legal sense, like "advocate," or "defense attorney." More generally, it can refer to a helper, mediator, or intercessor, one who appeals on another behalf. Another nuance is that of "comforter," as expressed in the sequence for Pentecost, when we pray, "You, of comforters the best," and ask for rest, refreshment, and solace.

What is paradoxical in this last aspect is that the kind of consolation provided by the comforter is not of the sort that wraps us in a warm, fuzzy cocoon and allows us to remain there forever. It is more akin to the loving nudge with which a mother bird impels her fledglings to take wing. As theologian Timothy Radcliffe, OP, puts it, "This is what the Holy Spirit does, thrusting us out of our ecclesiastical nest into mission" (*Why go to church? The Drama of the Eucharist*). In order to be able to thrust out, the Consoler also gives us the sure realization that we are never abandon. We have a home in the One who draws us ever more deeply into mutual indwelling. "[Y]ou are in me and I in you" (14:20)

The first reading gives us a glimpse into what results when disciples make their home in Christ and allow the generativity of the Spirit to be unleashed. Immediately before the passage chosen for today's first reading, the Acts of the Apostles tells us of the martyrdom of Stephen, who had been chosen as a minister from among the Greek speakers, esteemed as one "filled with faith and the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5). After Stephen's stoning, other preachers of the word were scattered but kept preaching. Among them is Philip, whom today's reading portrays as fearless enough to go into the region of Samaria and there proclaim Christ. His intrepid venture among a people previously thought to be enemies impels Peter and John also to leave the nest in Jerusalem and to continue Jesus' mission to the lost and forgotten. The Fourth Evangelist depicts the mission to Samaria begun by Jesus himself in an exchange with a woman at a well, who brings her townsfolk to believe in Jesus as savior of the world. (Jn 4:4-42).

Jesus does not leave any orphaned. He is the embodiment of the motherly God who never forgets her children (Isa 49:15) and a fatherly God who protects orphans and widows. (Ps 68:5). Just as parental love at its best is unconditional, so too is God's love. Although some translation of John 14:15 and 14:21 seem to imply that God's love and the sending of another Advocate are conditioned by human response, the focus is actually on the mutuality of love. The divine has been made manifest in God's gift of the Son (John 3:16); human love of God is expressed in the keeping of the commandments.

New Testament links

First Reading — Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

⁵ Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. ⁶ The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. ⁷ There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. ⁸ As a result there was great rejoicing in that town.

¹⁴ When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God,

they sent Peter and John to them, ¹⁵ and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 66:1-7, 16, 20

R: Cry out with joy to God, all the earth.

Cry out with joy to God all the earth, O sing to the glory of his name.
O render him glorious praise. Say to God: 'How tremendous your deeds! **(R)**

'Before you all the earth shall bow; shall sing to you, sing to your name!'
Come and see the works of God, tremendous his deeds among men. **(R)**

He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the river dry-shod.
Let our joy then be in him; he rules for ever by his might. **(R)**

Come and hear, all who fear God. I will tell what he did for my soul:
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer nor withhold his love from me. **(R)**

Second Reading — 1 Peter 3:15-18

¹⁵ Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. ¹⁶ But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. ¹⁷ And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

¹⁸ Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

Catechism of The Catholic Church

243. Before his Passover, Jesus announced the sending of "another Paraclete" (Advocate), the Holy Spirit. At work since creation, having previously "spoken through the prophets", the Spirit will now be with and in the disciples, to teach them and guide them "into all the truth".(Cf. Gen 1:2; Nicene Creed (DS 150); Jn 14:17, 26; 16:13) The Holy Spirit is thus revealed as another divine person with Jesus and the Father.

687. "No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."(1 Cor 2:11) Now God's Spirit, who reveals God, makes known to us Christ, his Word, his living Utterance, but the Spirit does not speak of himself. The Spirit who "has spoken through the prophets" makes us hear the Father's Word, but we do not hear the Spirit himself. We know him only in the movement by which he reveals the Word to us and disposes us to welcome him in faith. The Spirit of truth who "unveils" Christ to us "will not speak on his own."(Jn 16:13) Such properly divine self-effacement explains why "the world cannot receive [him], because it neither sees him nor knows him," while those who believe in Christ know the Spirit because he dwells with them.(Jn 14:17)

692. When he proclaims and promises the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus calls him the "Paraclete," literally, "he who is called to one's side," *ad-vocatus*.(Jn 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) "Paraclete" is commonly translated by "consoler," and Jesus is the first consoler.(Cf. 1 Jn 2:1) The Lord also called the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of truth."(Jn 16:13)

729. Only when the hour has arrived for his glorification does Jesus *promise* the coming of the Holy Spirit, since his Death and Resurrection will fulfill the promise made to the fathers.(Cf. Jn 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-15; 17:26) The Spirit of truth, the other Paraclete, will be given by the Father in answer to Jesus' prayer; he will be sent by the Father in Jesus' name; and Jesus will send him from the Father's side, since he comes from the Father. The Holy Spirit will come and we shall know him; he will be with us for ever; he will remain with us. The Spirit will teach us everything, remind us of all that Christ said to us and bear witness to him. The Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth and will glorify Christ. He will prove the world wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgment.

2615. Even more, what the Father gives us when our prayer is united with that of Jesus is "another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth."(Jn 14:16-17) This new dimension of prayer and of its circumstances is displayed throughout the farewell discourse.(Cf. Jn 14:23-26; 15:7,16; 16:13-15; 16:23-27) In the Holy Spirit, Christian prayer is a communion of love with the Father, not only through Christ but also *in him*: "Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."(Jn 16:24)

2671. The traditional form of petition to the Holy Spirit is to invoke the Father through Christ our Lord to give us the Consoler Spirit.(Cf. Lk 11:13) Jesus insists on this petition to be made in his name at the very moment when he promises the gift of the Spirit of Truth.(Cf. Jn 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) But the simplest and most direct prayer is also traditional, "Come, Holy Spirit," and every liturgical tradition has developed it in antiphons and hymns.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.
(*Roman Missal, Pentecost Sequence*)

Heavenly King, Consoler Spirit, Spirit of Truth, present everywhere and filling all things, treasure of all good and source of all life, come dwell in us, cleanse and save us, you who are All Good.(Byzantine Liturgy, Pentecost Vespers, Troparion)

Sharing and Discussion

1. If someone were to ask you for a "reason for your hope," what would be your answer?
2. "How would you describe your relationship with the Holy Spirit? What practices do you find most helpful for sustaining or building this relationship?"
3. This week's responsorial psalm centers gratitude for the "tremendous deeds" that God has done. Where did you recognize God's action in the past week? How did you respond in the moment?

Closing Prayer

Facilitator: Loving God, you invite us into relationship, even when we turn away. Hear

our prayers this day and give us ears to listen to your voice and hearts to embrace your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Facilitator: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen

The Living the Gospel Bible Study and Sharing sessions will resume in the Parish on the 16th of May 2026.

Every Saturday from 9.30 am – 11.30am

Venue: Level 3, Rm 03-06

All are invited!

For information contact:

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Reflection material available on Parish Website under – (Weekly Bible Sharing - Living the Gospel)

References for the Living the Gospel Reflection:

- 1) Gospel notes taken from the Navarre Bible
- 2) Gospel reflection and Living Liturgy are taken from “Living Liturgy for Sunday and Solemnities” by Order of St Benedict. Published by Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota. Reprinted with permission.
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