



SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

FIRST READING: Acts 1:6-14

A reading from Acts.

⁶When [the apostles] had come together, they asked [Jesus],
“Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?”
⁷He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods
that the Father has set by his own authority.
⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you,
and you will be my witnesses
in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
⁹When he had said this, as they were watching,
he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven,
suddenly two men in white robes stood by them.

¹¹They said, “Men of Galilee,
why do you stand looking up toward heaven?
This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven,
will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet,
which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away.

¹³When they had entered the city,
they went to the room upstairs where they were staying:
Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas,
Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus,
and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.

¹⁴All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer,
together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus,
as well as his brothers.

Word of God, word of life. or The word of the Lord.

PSALMODY: Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

FIRST READING *Alphaeus = al-FEE-us Zealot = ZEL-ut*

This is the story of the ascension of our Lord. Verses 6-11 demand a sense of awe and majesty in their reading. They ought to sound “awe-full.” The remaining verses appear to be Luke’s way of anchoring the moment in history by listing the prominent players and reminding his readers of the importance of “constantly devoting” ourselves to prayer in the aftermath of the resurrection and ascension.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

A reading from First Peter.

¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

¹³But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.

¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

^{5:6}Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time.

⁷Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

⁸Discipline yourselves; keep alert.

Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour.

⁹Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.

¹⁰And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.

¹¹To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

Word of God, word of life. *or* The word of the Lord.

SECOND READING

Peter's words are, obviously, addressed to a people in pain. Their suffering for the faith was apparently significant. But these words are addressed to the people of faith gathered now on Easter 7 as well. They are an invitation to translate or understand the suffering, pain, or difficulty which we may be experiencing as "sharing Christ's sufferings." They invite us to understand our suffering as holy work and to know that our pain will not last forever. This is an encouraging word. It is best summarized in the sentence "Cast all your anxiety on [God], because [God] cares for you." Sound encouraging.

GOSPEL: John 17:1-11

The holy gospel according to John.

¹After Jesus had spoken these words 「to his disciples,」
he looked up to heaven and said,
“Father, the hour has come;
glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you,
²since you have given him authority over all people,
to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.
³And this is eternal life,
that they may know you, the only true God,
and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
⁴I glorified you on earth
by finishing the work that you gave me to do.
⁵So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence
with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶“I have made your name known to those
whom you gave me from the world.
They were yours, and you gave them to me,
and they have kept your word.
⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you,
⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them,
and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you,
and they have believed that you sent me.
⁹I am asking on their behalf;
I am not asking on behalf of the world
but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours.
¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine,
and I have been glorified in them.
¹¹And now I am no longer in the world,
but they are in the world, and I am coming to you.
Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me,
so that they may be one, as we are one.”

The gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL

The Son's impassioned plea to the Father demands a genuine intensity on the part of the reader. This does not necessarily demand a raised voice—but it does require an invested heart. Help the assembly to hear the intensity of our Lord's love for his friends by praying his prayer with him, slowly and earnestly.