

# The Sixth Sunday of Easter

## May 5, 2024

THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT  
LOVE ONE ANOTHER  
AS I LOVE YOU

*John 15:12*



© JPPC



## Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

Saint Mary 14 Park Street + Sacred Heart 58 Church Street + Saint Mark 105 Stanley Street  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts

## Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

Rev. David A. Costa, Pastor  
Rev. Deacon Joseph E. Regali, Parish Deacon  
Sister Kathleen A. Corrigan, S.U.S.C., Pastoral Associate  
Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. & Rev. R. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P., Weekend Assistants  
Mrs. Martha O'Neill, Administrative Assistant  
Mrs. Jean Howard, Business Manager  
Mrs. Elaine Corvese, Director of Religious Education  
Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal, Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School  
Mr. Adam Turcotte, Director of Music  
Mr. Miguel Peixoto, Buildings Supervisor  
Mr. James Kitsock, Building Maintenance

### Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School

Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal  
57 Richards Avenue,  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760  
(508) 695-3072 FAX (508) 695-9074  
[smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org](mailto:smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org) [www.smhschool.com](http://www.smhschool.com)

### Saint Mary Cemetery

Mr. Jarrod Ward, Superintendent  
Towne Street  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760  
(508) 695-1173 or email [ripco@comcast.net](mailto:ripco@comcast.net)

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saint Mary Church • Saturday 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

### Sacrament of Baptism

Baptisms are celebrated on designated Sunday afternoons at 12:30 pm, with a limit of four families at each baptism. Please contact the office at [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com) for more information and available dates/locations.

### Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage is usually celebrated on Saturday morning and afternoon. Please contact the Parish Office at least nine months in advance to begin preparation.

### Sacrament of the Sick

Pastoral care to those in need of the sacrament of the sick is arranged through the parish office. Please call to arrange a visit.

### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is offered on the first Friday of each month in **Saint Mark Church** beginning at 9:00 am and ending at 6:00 pm with Benediction.

### Parish Offering

If you are attending in person, you may drop your contribution in the collection basket. You are welcome to mail your budget envelope to the parish office, at 14 Park Street, North Attleborough, MA 02760. You may also leave your envelope in the drop box located outside the parish office door, to the right on the landing. Thank you for your ongoing support!

### Weekend Masses

Saturday 4:00 pm **Saint Mary Church**  
Sunday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Sunday 9:30 am **Saint Mary Church**  
Sunday 11:00 am **Sacred Heart Church**

### Weekday Masses

Monday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Tuesday 4:30 pm **Saint Mark Church**  
Wednesday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Thursday 8:00 am Communion Service  
**Saint Mark Church**

*Links to:* Transfiguration of the Lord Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/Transfiguration-of-the-Lord-Parish-North-Attleborough-106529317647894/>

YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/ysfaxaty>

### Parish Office

14 Park Street,  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760

Parish e-mail • [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com)  
Parish website • [www.saintmaryna.com](http://www.saintmaryna.com)  
Phone 508-695-6161 Fax 508-695-5248

Faith Formation • [TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com](mailto:TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com)  
Faith Formation • 508-695-3823

Music Ministry • [transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com](mailto:transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com)

# MASS Intentions

## May 4/5 – The 6th Sunday of Easter

**Saturday** 4:00 pm **May 4 – Vigil (St. Mary)**  
Leon & Valentine Goulet  
Bob Chagnon  
Deceased Members of the  
Clark Family

**Sunday** 8:00 am **May 5 (St. Mark)**  
Deceased Members of the  
Blais, Genest & Gauthier  
Families

**Sunday** 9:30 am **May 5 (St. Mary)**  
James & Patricia Bradley  
Louis Abdou

**Sunday** 11:00 am **May 5 (Sacred Heart)**  
Philip Darragh  
Thomas Mournighan

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**Monday** 8:00 am **May 6 (St. Mark)**  
People of the Parish

**Tuesday** 4:30 pm **May 7 (St. Mark)**  
Joseph Dery  
Manuel & Maria C. Cabral

**Wednesday** 7:00 pm **May 8 (St. Mark)**  
Father Walter A. Sullivan

**Thursday** 9:30 am **May 9 (Sacred Heart)**  
People of the Parish

**Thursday** 12:05 pm **May 9 (St. Mary)**  
Grace Resendes

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## May 11/12 – The 7th Sunday of Easter

**Saturday** 4:00 pm **May 11 – Vigil (St. Mary)**  
Andria Rossi  
Louis DiCicco  
Vincent Giansante  
William Bauer

**Sunday** 8:00 am **May 12 (St. Mark)**  
Anita Coyle

**Sunday** 9:30 am **May 12 (St. Mary)**  
Living & Deceased Mothers

**Sunday** 11:00 am **May 12 (Sacred Heart)**  
Living & Deceased Mothers

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### Parish Contributions

Collection for April 27/28: \$12,833.50

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### Tuesday Communal Rosary Schedule



**Tuesday, May 7, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**  
Tuesday, May 14, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)  
Tuesday, May 21, 2024: Prayer & Pizza (5PM)

## Holyday of Obligation: Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord Thursday, May 9



Forty days after Easter, May 9, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, a holyday of obligation. In our parish, there will be three opportunities to participate at Mass for this holy day:

**Vigil Mass: Wednesday, May 8, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Saint Mark Church**

**Holyday Mass: Thursday, May 9, 9:30 a.m.**  
**Sacred Heart Church**

**Holyday Mass: Thursday, May 9, 12:05 p.m.**  
**Saint Mary Church**

As is our custom, the collection taken on the holyday is for the good work of our parish Saint Vincent de Paul Conference. Your financial support of their charitable activities is very much appreciated.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Over the next few weeks, the Town of North Attleborough will be reconfiguring the area on Park Street/North Washington Street in front of Saint Mary Church. Hopefully, this new design will provide a much safer and more efficient traffic flow.

You have most probably noticed the addition of a sidewalk following north on the west side of North Washington Street, along the Baptist Common. This will continue to the new entrance/exit onto/from Park Street from/to North Washington Street. In addition to new sidewalks on both Park Street and Tiff Street, there will be a new “driveway area” in front of Saint Mary Church (behind the new lawn and sidewalk) This is primarily for use at funerals and weddings, but we may also use this area for parishioner parking at weekend Masses and parish functions. You will note that this area will not be a roadway. A new flashing crosswalk light will be placed at the Tiff Street/Park Street corner. New crosswalks will also be painted across Tiff Street, Park Street, and North Washington Street. Please be aware that the speed limit will be lowered in this section of Park Street and North Washington Street.

Mark Hollowell, director of the Department of Public Works for the Town of North Attleborough, has been most generous in keeping us apprised of the Town’s plans and sharing this information. Mark has been a big help and we very much appreciate his reaching out and including us “in the loop.” I am confident that these improvements will greatly add to both the aesthetics of this historic area as well as the safety of our parishioners and fellow citizens.

I do have one request: Please BE PATIENT during this construction. Yes, it may be a little disruptive, but just think of the beautiful and safe outcome! I’m certain that we will need some time to get used to the new design, so patience will be key. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

## First Holy Communion 2024



This weekend and next, seventy-two children of our parish will receive the Lord in the Eucharist for the first time at special celebrations on Saturday, May 4, and Saturday, May 11. Please remember our children and their families in your prayer. Congratulations to:

### May 4, 10:00 a.m. Group

*Elliot Antonitis, Layla Augusto, Morgan Blier, Jacob Cetrano, Logan DaRosa, Emilie Eugene, Grant Garon, Jack Hall, Nathan Hebert, Ryan Holden, Giuliana Kelly, Rylie Leveille, Lillian Marcotte, Tyler Michel, Matthew Moreau, Livia Mourad, Kaydence Noviello, Gianna O'Day, Evan Pare, Carter Robbins, Tony Rosario, Denery Sheridan, Allaire Torsiello, Roslie Wilcox, Benjamin Yawn*

### May 4, 1:00 p.m. Group

*Owen Belluso, Ava Buchanio, Caroline Cobb, Ailish Daley, Charles DeBiasio, Christopher Drugan, Maya Hayes, Olivia Hinckley, Benjamin Howe, Emma Meyer, Letty O'Connell, Conor Sees, David Shamshoian, Sienna Spinelli*

### May 11, 10:00 a.m. Group

*Joseph Affonso, Mackenzie Allen, Alexandra Avril, Geoffrey Burgess, Caroline Carter, Raegan Carroll, Mya Case, Madelynn DaSilva, John Driscoll, Oliver Duperron, Duke Fellmann, Sofia Garcia, Patrick Hall, Brielle Jean, Nicholas Keenan, Avery Laakso, Emerson Laakso, Marley Lambert, Gabriel Langlands, Henry Larson, Lucy LeCompte, Zoey Lorenzo, Genevieve McSally, Joel Morse, Mackenzie Mottau, Vivienne O'Connell, Ava Parrillo, Elena Perry, Ashlyn Pichette, Enzo Roccabello, Joshua Santos, Andrew Sheytanian, Brooke Woods*

## The 2024 Catholic Charities Appeal

### *Renew the Face of the Earth*

The 83rd annual Catholic Charities Appeal of the Diocese of Fall River has begun. Since 1942, this Appeal has helped people in all phases of life – children, youth, parents, the elderly-across all of the areas of our Diocese. Your generous donation supports, sustains, and grows the numerous agencies, programs, and ministries of our diocesan Church that provide food, shelter, education and Faith formation, counseling, and support for thousands of people.

All of the registered households of our parish should have received Appeal information through the mail. We encourage you to support the 2024 Appeal as generously as you can. You can make a one-time gift or a pledge with convenient payments throughout the year. You may give by mail, use a contribution card located in the church lobby, or pledge/donate online at:

[www.GiveFRDiocese.org](http://www.GiveFRDiocese.org)

May God bless your generosity and concern for the many ways we as Church respond to the needy among us!

## Baptism Congratulations

Our prayerful best wishes are extended to three of our children and their families who recently celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism. Please welcome and remember:

### *Miles John Babcock*



Child of Breanne (Dusel) & Adam Babcock  
Godchild of Holly Dusel & Gregory Dusel

### *David Vincent Chiarolanza*



Child of Hannah (O'Toole) & Anthony Chiarolanza  
Godchild of Alysa Robbins & Joshua Beattie

### *Leia Ruth Tebbets*



Child of Kimberly (DeGirolamo) & David Tebbets  
Godchild of Laurie Callahan & Joseph DeGirolamo

## Women's Guild Closing Banquet

What a delightful year it's been for our Women's Guild Program! We've had the pleasure of forging new friendships within our Transfiguration of the Lord Parish community while enjoying enriching experiences in both faith and social activities. As we reflect on these moments, we eagerly anticipate our closing banquet scheduled for **Thursday, May 9th at 6:00 p.m.** at Conrad's Casual Dining Restaurant in Foxborough. The dinner will be buffet style and will include "Conrads Famous Steak Tips", Stuffed Chicken Breast, and Baked Haddock. The cost will be \$35.00 pp. To RSVP for this special occasion, kindly reach out to Karen Smith at (508) 212-7377 or Diana Gray at (508) 695-1143.

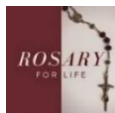
## Mother's Day Roses



Honor all mothers by purchasing a silk rose after Mass on Mother's Day weekend, May 11/12! **Any donation is appreciated.** You may give the rose to a special woman in your life or place it in a vase to honor our Blessed Mother. Proceeds benefit the Massachusetts Citizens for Life, a charitable organization that promotes public policy and education for the dignity of every human life from conception to natural death. Thank you from the Transfiguration Respect Life Group!

### Rosary for Life

The Respect Life Committee of Transfiguration of the Lord Parish is pleased to announce that we will lead a Rosary for Life at 4:00 pm, prior to the 4:30 pm daily Mass in **Saint Mark Church** on the *first, second, fourth, and fifth Tuesday* of each month. The communal Rosary is also livestreamed for any participants who wish to join us remotely.



### Knights of Columbus Council #330



#### Monthly Meeting:

Council #330 of the Knights of Columbus has been serving the Catholic Community of North Attleborough for 125 years. The Knights meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm, in the St. Mary Church Hall. Please drop by on meeting nights if you'd like to learn more about the Knights. Council #330 is committed to assisting local charities that align with the values of our Faith such as the Parish, the Parish school, and Abundant Hope. Please contact Jim Schromm via email with any questions: [jim.schromm@verizon.net](mailto:jim.schromm@verizon.net).

#### Knights of Columbus Diaper Drive:

The Knights of Columbus are organizing a Diaper Drive to benefit Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center. We are requesting donations of diapers in all sizes, but Abundant Hope is in dire need of larger size diapers, (sizes 4, 5 and 6). We are also requesting donations of diaper wipes. We will have containers at each of the three North Attleborough churches, this weekend, and continuing into the month of May. Thank you very much for your support of Abundant Hope and the Knights!

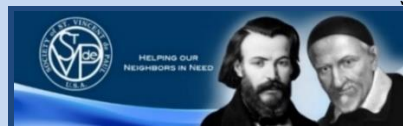
### Please Remember our Deceased Parishioners:

*Gerald O. Flamand  
Louis R. LeBlanc, Sr.  
Mary Ellen Glynn  
James P. Perkoski  
Glenna (Childs) Butler*



*Eternal rest grant unto our beloved dead, O Lord.  
Let perpetual light shine upon them.*

## Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society



Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are in need or are suffering, in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul. The Society meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month in the parish hall in Saint Mary Church at 6:30 pm. Please join us!

### Call for Assistance:

If you need assistance, please call the help line for our parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society. They can offer information about the types of assistance available. Please call **508-212-4755** for help or more information.

### 2024 Top Hat Award Recipient:

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, the District of Greater Attleboro Saint Vincent de Paul Council held their annual Ozanam Mass and Top Hat Awards. Each year, a Vincentian from each parish is chosen for this one-time award. The award goes to a Vincentian that exemplifies the spirit of Saint Vincent de Paul of loving and serving their neighbor.

This year, the Transfiguration of the Lord Saint Vincent de Paul Conference honored **Pam Watson**. From the very beginning, Pam has been involved in just about all aspects of our outreach. Pam goes on home visits, fields calls on our busy helpline, and is one of our key people helping to keep the food pantry running smoothly.

Pam is one of our most valued Vincentians. She has become a good friend to all and has the respect and admiration of our conference members. She is a pleasure to work with. Congratulations to Pam and may the Holy Spirit continue to guide her and all our Vincentians as we minister to all of our neighbors in need.

### New Website & New Online Giving Platform



Please note that we are in the process of redesigning our parish website and plan to roll out our new online presence within a few weeks. As part of this process (and it is a lengthy process, for sure!), our online giving platform will also change.

At present, our parish uses two distinct online giving companies. These were both used before the merging of the parishes into the new Transfiguration Parish. The new website company has an online component which ties directly into our parish census allowing for more streamlined financial recording and tracking. There are many threads that need to be woven together before this process is up and running. When all of these moving parts are in place and ready to work for us, we will be doing a full roll-out of the new website and the new online giving platform. Your patience is GREATLY appreciated!

# SAINTS

SAINT MARY-SACRED HEART

Educational Opportunities:  
SMSH Saints go to Capron Park Zoo!



At Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School, our Saints enjoy educational opportunities outside of the traditional classroom instruction. SSMH offers a myriad of valuable additions to our curriculum to cater to the diverse interests of our Saints while fostering an engaging learning environment.

Most recently, our Kindergarten and Grade 1 Saints had an enriching adventure to explore the Capron Park Zoo. During their visit, they gained insights into various habitats and discovered fascinating details about the zoo itself. It was a wonderful experience for our Saints!

## Friends of SSMH: Upcoming Outings



As announced, the Friends of SSMH is offering various one-day and multi-day outings:

Join us on Wednesday, June 19 for the “*Rolling Stones Tribute*” show, at Lake Pearl in Wrentham, MA. Price per person is **\$89.00** and includes luncheon, tax and gratuity, and show ticket. Information flyers are available at the doors of the church or you may contact Nancy Chapman or May Courbron at 508-243-2904 or by email: [friendsofsmsh@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsmsh@gmail.com) for more information. Please note that tickets are **NOT** sold at the door.

In addition, please consider joining us on July 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for the **Boothbay Harbor & Cabbage Island Lobsterbake**, an amazing adventure featuring some of Maine’s most picturesque areas. Price per person is **\$599 (double occupancy)**, or **\$729 (single occupancy)**. For more information, please call Pat Bishop at 508-243-2904.

Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School:  
Educating for Eternity!



Join the SSMH teaching team and make a difference! Are you an educator who wants to give back to your community? Do you desire a faith-filled environment where the teachings of Jesus Christ are front and center? We would love to have you join our Saints Family. Currently, both day to day substitute teachers and a physical education teacher for 2024-2025 are needed.



For more information, please contact Mrs. Lisa Serak, principal at [lserak@smsh.dfrcs.org](mailto:lserak@smsh.dfrcs.org).



**Apply now to be a SSMH scientist!**

*Grade 5 wants to know - Is it a solid? Is it a liquid? It's oobleck!*



An important component of our science program is utilizing inquiry as a tool to understand scientific concepts. This is just one of the ways our teachers enhance how the Saints learn each and every day. We invite you to discover more about our school’s strong curriculum by visiting our website [www.smshschool.com](http://www.smshschool.com). Accepting applications for the 2024-2025 academic year.



## Saint of the Week: Saint Damien of Molokai

The man who would become St. Damien of Molokai, was born in rural Belgium, on January 3, 1840. His name was Jozef De Veuster, and he was the youngest of seven children. Growing up on the farm, Jozef was prepared to take over for his family, but he did not want the responsibility. Instead, he wanted to follow his older brother and two sisters who took religious vows. Jozef attended school until the age of 13 when his help was needed on the family farm full-time. He aided his family until he was old enough to enter the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. He took the name Damien, after a sixth century martyr. In 1864, Damien's brother who was also in the same order of religious, was ordered to Hawaii. But his brother became ill, so Br. Damien offered to go in his place.

The brothers worried that Br. Damien was too uneducated to become a priest, although he was not considered unintelligent. Br. Damien demonstrated his ability by quickly learning Latin from his brother. Br. Damien prayed each day before an icon of Saint Francis Xavier to be sent on a mission. Eventually, his religious brothers agreed to send him and have him ordained. Br. Damien arrived in Hawaii in March 1864, and was ordained as a priest on the island of Hawaii two months later. For nine years, he worked on the island as a priest, leading an important, yet undistinguished life.

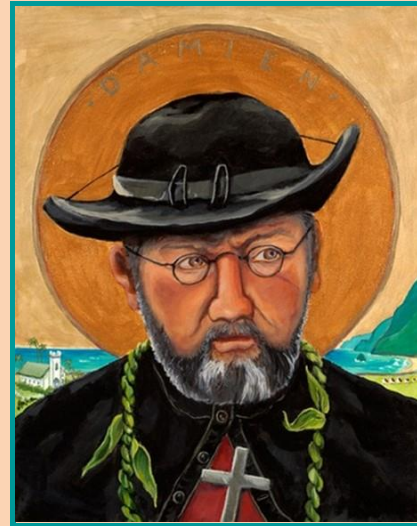
In 1866, Hawaii established a leper colony on the Kalaupapa Peninsula. It was still mistakenly believed that leprosy was highly contagious. This belief resulted in the forced quarantine of leprosy patients. These people still needed spiritual and medical care, so to Fr. Damien discerned his call to serve them. In 1873, Fr. Damien made the trip to be with these people in their colony.

Upon arrival, he found the colony was poorly maintained. Anarchy reigned among the people living there. Many patients required treatment but had nobody to care for them. Other patients took to drinking and became severe alcoholics. Every kind of immorality and misbehavior was on display in the lawless colony. There was no law or order. Fr. Damien realized the people needed leadership, so he provided it. He asked people to come together to build houses and schools and eventually the parish church, St. Philomena. The church still stands today. The sick were cared for and the dead buried. Order and routine made the colony livable. Fr. Damien personally provided much of the care the people needed.

Fr. Damien contracted leprosy in 1885, after several years of work. He realized he had the disease when he placed his foot into scalding water by accident, but felt no pain. This was a common way by which people discovered they were infected. Leprosy attacks nerve endings and a victim may hurt themselves but not feel any pain. Fr. Damien continued his work, despite his illness, which slowly took over his body. He derived strength from prayer and devotion. He often went to the cemetery to pray the Rosary or spent time in the presence of the Eucharist. "It is at the foot of the altar that we find the strength we need in our isolation," he wrote.

After sixteen years in the colony, Fr. Damien succumbed to leprosy on April 15, 1889. He was first buried nearby, then his remains were transferred to Belgium in 1936. His right hand was returned to Hawaii in 1995 to be reburied in his original grave at Molokai. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in Brussels, Belgium on June 4, 1995. His sainthood was confirmed on October 11, 2009 by Pope Benedict XVI. His feast day is May 10.

## Feast Day of St. Damien of Molokai: May 10<sup>th</sup>



*"The Eucharist is the bread that gives strength... It is at once the most eloquent proof of His love and the most powerful means of fostering His love in us. He gives Himself every day so that our hearts as burning coals may set afire the hearts of the faithful."*

-St. Damien of Molokai

## Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

### Monthly Meeting:

The next meeting of the Respect Life Group will take place on Thursday, **June 6, 2024 at 6:30 pm in Sacred Heart Church's Library**. We hope to see you there!

### Local Walk for Life - May 10th | 9:30am-2pm:

Individuals are invited to attend the Local Diocesan Walk for Life on Friday, May 10th, at La Salette Shrine in Attleboro. The day will include Mass with Bishop da Cunha, keynote by Massachusetts State Legislature Representative Alan Silvia, Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Adoration, and Walk for Life. Registration for Mass is -required due to limited seating. Register yourself or a group here:

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/cjsz3fg>  
For more information, email [irobinson@dioc-fr.org](mailto:irobinson@dioc-fr.org).

# The 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter - May 5, 2024

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK



Excerpts from the *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, second typical edition* © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. Used with permission. All rights reserved. No portion of this text may be reproduced by any means without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

## First Reading

### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and, falling at his feet, paid him homage. Peter, however, raised him up, saying, "Get up. I myself am also a human being."

Then Peter proceeded to speak and said, "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him."

While Peter was still speaking these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the word. The circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit should have been poured out on the Gentiles also, for they could hear them speaking in tongues and glorifying God. Then Peter responded, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit even as we have?" He ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*



## Responsorial Psalm

**R. The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.**

Sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done wondrous deeds;  
His right hand has won victory for him,  
his holy arm.

**R. The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.**

The LORD has made his salvation known:  
in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice.  
He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness  
toward the house of Israel.

**R. The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.**

All the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation by our God.  
Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands;  
break into song; sing praise.

**R. The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.**



## Second Reading

### A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*



## Gospel Acclamation

**R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

*Whoever loves me will keep my word, says the Lord,  
and my Father will love him and we will come to him.*

**R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

## Gospel

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

† A reading from the holy Gospel according to John  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

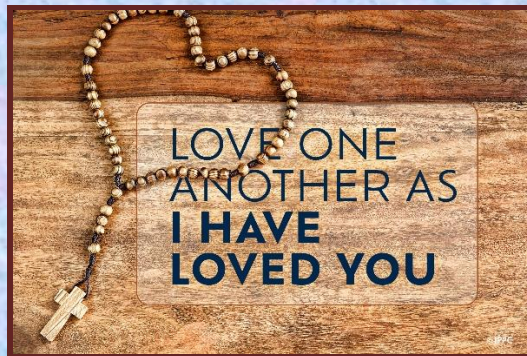
Jesus said to his disciples:

"As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy might be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another."

The Gospel of the Lord.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*



## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### Love:

Christians talk about love a lot. In English, this little word is forced to do the heavy lifting. It has to stand for everything from the overly sweet Valentine's day hearts to the nuanced love that lasts a lifetime. If love were all fluff and sugar, we could get along with a book of sentimental sayings. But love is strong and demanding, and for this kind of love, we need a book of Gospels.

### Comment:

Just prior to today's selection from the Acts of the Apostles, we meet Cornelius the Roman centurion, a devout, upright, and God-fearing man who is much loved and respected by the Jews. Cornelius inquires after Peter, and Peter goes to his home.

The reading opens today with Peter coming to Cornelius' home and being greeted with a kind of respect that unnerves Peter. And there is yet more to this surprising visit: Cornelius in his seemingly simple request unwittingly forces a decision. What is Peter to do about this good and loving Gentile who seeks baptism? What is to become of the small but growing band of those who follow Jesus?

Peter asks himself what he can possibly do with a people who have already been blessed by the Holy Spirit. His actions seem right: Peter baptizes Cornelius and his household and remains with them a few days. This story tells of the first welcome of a Gentile into what would become a universal Church, open to all. Cornelius' request and Peter's response set the Church on a course that makes it truly universal. The Spirit leaps over the boundaries of old rites and cherished memories of a chosen yet circumscribed people. The promised Spirit makes it known that the whole world is now chosen.

The Gospel also reminds us who is choosing and who is chosen. In Israel's experience, would-be disciples gathered to listen to various rabbis. Through this protracted process, disciples eventually chose the rabbi they wished to follow. Jesus reverses the process. In his case, he, the rabbi or teacher, chooses the disciples, just as the Father has chosen Jesus. Throughout their public ministry together, Jesus has taught them all he knows, and now during this Last Supper discourse, he invites them into a deeper intimacy. Their relationship to him is not just that of a master to servant, but one of friend to friend.

Jesus is clearly intense in his insistence that they love one another and live on in his love. He does not merely suggest this nor simply urge the disciples to do so, he commands it. The word "love" here is translated from the Greek *agape*, which describes the mutual self-giving relationship between Jesus and God and must exist mutually between Jesus and his followers. The love that the Father bestowed on Christ is spread abroad. It gets up and works. It visits the house of the unlikely candidate, Cornelius.

### Reflection:

Easy love doesn't require obedience and openness to its demands. It doesn't call for followup. It doesn't demand that we work to stay vulnerable. The Gospel, however, doesn't speak of easy love, which is really not love at all. The second reading tells us that the love demanded of us is possible because God has first loved us. When love is spoken of in the two readings attributed to John, we see how important it is to understand and appreciate that Jesus is the manifestation of God's abiding love. Through him, God's love is poured out. John calls us to recognize this and then to respond by loving one another. Our loving brings full circle the love of God manifest in Jesus.

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# Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, May 5, 2024



Invest time each week to expand your vocabulary and deepen your faith.

05 May 2024

## WORD OF THE WEEK

### Ascension \ə-,sen(t)- shən\

The act of **ascending**, or rising upward. The final earthly manifestation of the Risen Lord after the Resurrection. Jesus is lifted up and taken from view, transferred to the realm of the divine.

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-ascension>

### CONTEXT

In the Scriptures, many ancient holy figures were said to be taken up to heaven, especially Enoch and Elijah.... Thus, **ascension** to the heavens came to be expected of holy and great persons; it indicated divine approval of them as well as their accession to heavenly power.

—Father Jerome Neyrey, S.J.

The **ascended** Christ, far from being absent, fills the whole cosmos in a new way.

—Sister Brid Long, S.S.L.

His **ascension** is our glory and our hope.

—Saint Augustine

### WHY IT MATTERS

The **Ascension** establishes the Christ's universal rule and the church as the visible Body of Christ, equipped with the power and courage for mission. It assures us of our destiny to be with Christ now and on the last day. As Saint Augustine says, "While in heaven, he is also with us; and while on earth, we are with him."

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 667): Jesus Christ, having entered the sanctuary of heaven once and for all, intercedes constantly for us as the mediator who assures us of the permanent outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

### RELATED WORDS

Assumption | Resurrection | Pentecost | Epiphany

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

### What is Christ's Ascension?

**Ascension** seems like a feast designed to resolve a mystery: after Easter, where did Jesus go? Answer: back to his Father. Yet **Ascension** stories don't exactly provide a snapshot of Jesus leaving town. Luke says Jesus was removed to heaven from Bethany on the day of his Resurrection. Acts of the Apostles reports this event 40 days later, from the Mount of Olives. Mark agrees that it happened on Easter—but while Jesus was at table with his disciples. Houston, we have a problem.

Or maybe not. Saint John Chrysostom insisted **Ascension** simply conveys the final exaltation of Christ after the humiliation of the cross. Saint Augustine viewed the **Ascension** as the glorification of us all: where Jesus went, we too might go. Theologians distinguish between "passive" assumptions and the active **Ascension** of Jesus. Another unique element of the **Ascension** is that while Jesus is physically gone, he remains present in a new way. The church becomes the visible Body of Christ on Earth, bearing his Spirit and sharing his Eucharist. In short, Jesus lifts up the church to where he is.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-ascension>

## REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD (MAY 12)

### Unlimited energy supply

All is not lost when Jesus leaves the disciples. In fact, nothing is lost because his Spirit remains—his essence, his energy, the fullness of his love for God and for us. Jesus is with us always through the power of the Holy Spirit. Each day, in every moment no matter what the circumstance, that power is yours to draw on. You are never alone. Nothing can separate you from the love—or the power—of God.

READINGS: Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23; Mark 16:15-20 (58 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/051224-Ascension.cfm>).  
"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you."

### FAITH IN ACTION

Don't waste energy trying to go it alone. Draw on God's power—it's free and totally renewable.



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