

# Sunday Message

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE WORD

Year A • 21 May 2023 • Psalter Week 3

## GLORIOUS DESTINY

JOHN 17:1-11



Today's Gospel comes from what is known as the final discourse of Jesus. It takes place as the disciples gather in the upper room to celebrate the Passover.

Judas has just left to betray Jesus, who now knows that he is about to endure his passion and death. Despite the fact that he will be crucified as a criminal and a failure, Jesus uses the word "glorify" to describe what will happen to him.

"Glory" is a key word in the Gospel of John. In the eyes of the world, Jesus' mission was a failure. But seen from the perspective of God's saving plan, it was no failure but a glorious triumph. If Jesus was nailed to a cross, it was so that he could be lifted up, exalted in glory. That process of glory will begin very soon. In it, Jesus will be revealed as the faithful servant of God, who was despised and rejected but who would be raised to great heights.

Jesus describes the key to eternal life. "Eternal life is this:" Jesus tells his disciples, "to know ... the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom [God has] sent." Do this, and all of us will have a share in the glory of heaven. ■

### LEARN

The Christian witnesses to the faith at all times

Prayer is central to the life of the Christian

The Christian looks forward to the glory of the resurrection

### SAY

"Lord, help me to cling to you every day. Never let me be parted from you. Amen."

### DO

Eternal life, Jesus says, is to know the one true God and Jesus Christ whom God has sent. How familiar are you with the catechism of the Church? How well do you know the Bible? How well do you know Jesus and the only true God in heaven?

### PRAY

More Christian martyrs are being created now than at any time in the past. Pray for all those who are happy to suffer for the sake of the Gospel.

### REFLECT

In today's second reading, Peter talks about sharing in the sufferings of Christ. It is a blessing, he says, when people mock and insult you for being a Christian. One should thank God for the honour of bearing the name of Christ. It is an extraordinary change from only a short period before when Peter denied Jesus three times, and had locked himself behind closed doors, afraid for his life. Now Peter is on fire with faith. Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, he preaches the Good News to anyone who will listen. He is happy even to die for the sake of the Gospel. Peter's belief in the resurrection has changed everything for him.

Unlike Peter, we may never have denied Jesus publicly. We may never have locked ourselves behind closed doors out of fear of persecution. But witnessing to the Gospel in 2023 is not easy. It can be tempting to keep our heads down, to practise our faith quietly, almost surreptitiously, to not wish to offend secular friends or rock any boats. How happy are you to suffer for your faith, as St Peter advocates in his letter? Would you be happy to risk all for the sake of the Gospel? Would you be prepared even to die for it? ■

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

O Lord, hear my voice, for I have called to you;  
of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face;  
hide not your face from me, alleluia.

**GLORIA**

Glorify to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT**

Graciously hear our supplications, O Lord,  
so that we, who believe that the Saviour of  
the human race  
is with you in your glory,  
may experience, as he promised,  
until the end of the world,  
his abiding presence among us.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING**

Acts 1: 12-14

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.  
After Jesus was taken up into heaven, the  
apostles went back from the Mount of Olives,  
as it is called, to Jerusalem, a short distance  
away, no more than a sabbath walk; and  
when they reached the city they went to the  
upper room where they were staying; there  
were Peter and John, James and Andrew,  
Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and  
Matthew, James son of Alphaeus and Simon  
the Zealot, and Jude son of James. All these  
joined in continuous prayer, together with  
several women, including Mary the mother of  
Jesus, and with his brothers.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalm 26

Response:

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness  
in the land of the living.

Or Alleluia!

- The Lord is my light and my help;  
whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;  
before whom shall I shrink? (R.)
- There is one thing I ask of the Lord,  
for this I long,

to live in the house of the Lord,  
all the days of my life,  
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,  
to behold his temple. (R.)

- O Lord, hear my voice when I call;  
have mercy and answer.  
Of you my heart has spoken:  
"Seek his face". (R.)

**SECOND READING**

1 Peter 4: 13-16

A reading from the first letter of St Peter.  
If you can have some share in the sufferings  
of Christ, be glad, because you will enjoy  
a much greater gladness when his glory is  
revealed. It is a blessing for you when they  
insult you for bearing the name of Christ,  
because it means that you have the Spirit of  
glory, the Spirit of God resting on you. None  
of you should ever deserve to suffer for being  
a murderer, a thief, a criminal or an informer;  
but if anyone of you should suffer for being a  
Christian, then he is not to be ashamed of it;  
he should thank God that he has been called  
one.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia  
I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord;  
I will come back to you, and your hearts will  
be full of joy.  
Alleluia.

**GOSPEL**

John 17: 1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
John.

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:  
"Father, the hour has come:  
glorify your Son  
so that your Son may glorify you;  
and, through the power over all mankind  
that you have given him,  
let him give eternal life to all those you have  
entrusted to him.  
And eternal life is this:  
to know you,  
the only true God,  
and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.  
I have glorified you on earth  
and finished the work  
that you gave me to do.  
Now, Father, it is time for you to glorify me  
with that glory I had with you  
before ever the world was.  
I have made your name known  
to the men you took from the world to give  
me.  
They were yours and you gave them to me,  
and they have kept your word.  
Now at last they know  
that all you have given me comes indeed  
from you;  
for I have given them  
the teaching you gave to me,  
and they have truly accepted this, that I  
came from you,  
and have believed that it was you who sent  
me.  
I pray for them;  
I am not praying for the world  
but for those you have given me,  
because they belong to you:  
all I have is yours  
and all you have is mine,

and in them I am glorified.  
I am not in the world any longer,  
but they are in the world."  
and I am coming to you."

The Gospel of the Lord.  
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
*(all bow during the next two lines)*  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the  
Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living  
and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, O Lord, the prayers of your faithful  
with the sacrificial offerings,  
that through these acts of devotedness  
we may pass over the glory of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

Father, I pray that they may be one  
as we are also one, alleluia.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Hear us, O God our Saviour,  
and grant us confidence,  
and through these sacred mysteries  
there will be accomplished in the body of the  
whole Church  
what has already come to pass in Christ her  
Head  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
Amen.

