16 MAY 2021
The Seventh Sunday of Easter

The gospel for Easter's seventh Sunday is always taken from the long prayer Jesus prays for his followers in John's gospel on the night before his death, and always includes Jesus' desire that his followers will be one as he and the Father are one. This oneness is not mere doctrinal agreement or institutional unity, but mutual abiding, interpenetrating life, mutual love, and joy. This oneness is the work of the Spirit whom we have received but also await. Come, Holy Spirit!

In the days between Jesus' ascension and Pentecost, Peter oversees the process whereby one of the members of the community of believers is chosen to be the twelfth apostle, in order to fill the vacancy created by Judas's treachery and death.

FIRST READING: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

15In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one
hundred twenty persons) and said, 16"Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy
Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested
Jesus—17for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry." 21So one of
the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among
us, 22beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of
these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." 23So they proposed two, Joseph called
Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. 24Then they prayed and said, "Lord,
you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen 25to take the place
in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." 26And
they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

L The word of the Lord. C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 1

1Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!
2Their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and they meditate on God's teaching day and night.
3They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither;
everything they do shall prosper.
4It is not so with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.
5Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.
6For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.

God has borne witness to the gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ. Whoever believes in the Son of God believes in the witness of God and has the promise of eternal life.

SECOND READING: 1 John 5:9-13

9 If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God
that he has testified to his Son. 10 Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their
hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony
that God has given concerning his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and
this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God
does not have life.
13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know
that you have eternal life.

L The word of the Lord. C **Thanks be to God.**

In this reading the church hears Jesus' words on the night before his death— his prayer for his disciples and for all who would believe in him through their words.

GOSPEL: John 17:6-19

[Jesus prayed:] 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. 7 Now they know that
everything you have given me is from you; 8 for 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. 9 I 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. 10 All mine are yours, and
yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11 And 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. 12 While I was with them, I protected
them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except
the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you,
and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.
14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the
world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world,
but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do
not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me
into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that
they also may be sanctified in truth."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**