

## Sixth Sunday of Easter – May 21, 2017 – Good Shepherd Parish

### Scripture Reading: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed the Christ to them. With one accord, the crowds paid attention to what was said by Philip when they heard it and saw the signs he was doing. For unclean spirits, crying out in a loud voice, came out of many possessed people, and many paralyzed or crippled people were cured. There was great joy in that city.

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who went down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for it had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

### Psalm: Ps 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20

R. (1) Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Shout joyfully to God, all the earth,  
sing praise to the glory of his name;  
proclaim his glorious praise.  
Say to God, "How tremendous are your deeds!"

R. Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

"Let all on earth worship and sing praise to you,  
sing praise to your name!"  
Come and see the works of God,  
his tremendous deeds among the children of  
Adam.

R. Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

He has changed the sea into dry land;  
through the river they passed on foot.  
Therefore let us rejoice in him.  
He rules by his might forever.

R. Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Hear now, all you who fear God, while I declare  
what he has done for me.  
Blessed be God who refused me not  
my prayer or his kindness!

R. Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

### Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 3:15-18

Beloved: Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that be the will of God, than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that he might lead you to God. Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the Spirit.

### Gospel: John 14:15-21

Jesus said to his disciples: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows him. But you know him, because he remains with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me, because I live and you will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him."



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### **INVITATION TO PRAY**

*Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God.*

**Proclaim the Scriptures out loud.**

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

### **INVITATION TO REFLECT**

Nostalgia sells. Radio stations blast out “oldies,” television endlessly recalls shows from Jack Benny to Leave it to Beaver to I Love Lucy to M\*A\*S\*H to ... well, you fill in the blanks. It is a human thing to remember the spirit of the past. We do it in part to understand better who we are and how we got that way. It is not all media hype, designed to “sell product,” though some of it is. Hype, hype, hype. Yet much of what our nostalgia dredges up is actually good, and remains so. Under God’s impetus we recall what it means to be a Christian. Especially in Easter season, we sit around the campfire of our memories, telling stories. Remember Philip who said to Jesus, “just show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Of course he was in the process at that very moment of seeing Jesus and therefore of seeing the Father, but did not know it.

### **Do you touch and receive Jesus on your tongue at Mass and let yourself be merged with Christ today?**

One person moves closer to the campfire and says, “Do you remember Jesus’ words just before his passion and death? That he would send the Spirit of Truth into our hearts. And we would not be left orphans. It was hard to understand then and it is still pretty tough.” Someone stammers, “L-- L- Let us go over it one more time.” A brave one tries to sum it up. “*First*, Jesus seemed to say, ‘God the Abba is so much within me that every time you see me it is the same thing as seeing God. “*Second*, he said, ‘I am going to apply that same understanding to you! I will be so much within you—yes, you normal people—that when anyone sees you it will be the same thing as seeing me! “And of course, since the Father is in me, they will know the Father too!’” Philip gulped. “I, I almost have it. Maybe. Or maybe not. Please try it again.” “Ok.” Jesus said, “I am going back to the Father, back to the one who sent me. The world will not see me anymore. But that doesn’t make me absent from you. I and Abba will be within you so that your very insides will be one with the Spirit of me and of the Father. Let me put it simply: “Who sees me sees the Father. “Who sees you sees me.” Philip saw daylight. He was touched by the truth. Look at him in the First Reading. He leaves the fireside of memories and begins running from place to place doing miracles and preaching about the Messiah!

*With one accord, the crowds paid attention to what was said by Philip, when they heard it and saw the signs he was doing. For, unclean spirits, crying out in a loud voice, came out of many possessed people, and many paralyzed or crippled people were cured. There was great joy in that city.*

Do you also see daylight, at least on some days? Do you say yes to Christ’s presence in you? Do you touch and receive Jesus on your tongue at Mass and let yourself be merged with Christ today? Do you say “yes,” or is there too much “no”? If the latter, read Sunday’s readings again. Simple? No. Well, maybe it is simple. Just receive and love.

### **INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING**

1. The Samaritans saw many signs and were filled with “great joy.” What are the signs of the presence of God in your life? Do any signs fill you with joy? Could you think of these signs as “everyday miracles”?
2. How do you indicate by your life that the Spirit inspires you? How do you “sanctify Christ as Lord” in all of life’s arena: home, government, Church, world, and all creation?
3. “Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him.” If studying or reading or discussing are your only approaches to God, what else is needed, according to this reading? How does love impact knowledge and understanding in any friendship?

### **INVITATION TO ACT**

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

### **CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY**

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another’s openness and sensitivity. Conclude with the following:

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. Amen