

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

YEAR B

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

O God,
we belong to you
and to Jesus, your Son.
Help us to pray to you,
and as we pray,
may we get to know you
more and more each day.
We ask you this
through Jesus
who lives with you
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The mission of the church is to live in unity, holiness and fidelity.

Our Gospel reading is the prayer of Jesus for his disciples, that they may remain united, that they may be holy, that they may be faithful to his Word. These are the characteristics by which the world will know who Jesus is and that he lives among his disciples. In the early church, a sign of the unity of believers was the community around the twelve apostles. The reading from Acts tells us that the disciples chose a man to replace Judas, and thereby maintain that sign of unity. Note, however, that this man must be one who was with them as Jesus taught them, one who can be faithful to the Word. Note also, that before making the choice, the disciples pray. These characteristics—unity, holiness, and fidelity to the Word—remain the signs of the Christian community even today.

FIRST READING: Acts 1:15-17, 20-26

This is a reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

One day,
when about a hundred and twenty followers
of Jesus were gathered together,
Peter said to them,

“My friends,
you know that Judas was an apostle
and shared in this ministry of ours.
But he was the one who betrayed Jesus.
It is written in the Psalms:
‘Let someone else take his place.’

“So, now we must name someone
to take Judas’ place and to be with us
to proclaim the resurrection.
It must be someone
who was one of our group
while Jesus was with us,
from the time of John the Baptist
until the day that Jesus
was taken up to heaven.”

And so they suggested two men:
Joseph and Matthias.
Then they prayed,


“Lord, you know the hearts of everyone.
So show us which of these two you choose
to take the place of Judas as an apostle.”

Then they drew lots and Matthias was chosen
and he became one of the apostles.


This is the Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Psalm 33

RESPONSE:

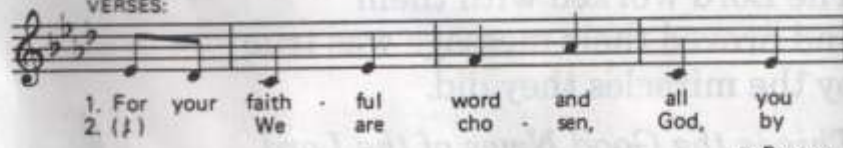


Lord, be with us, with your love, be with us,



all our hope is in you.

VERSES:

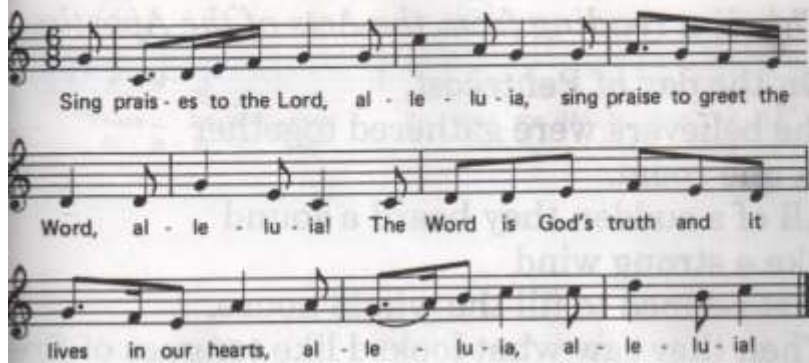


1. For your faith - ful are word and all you
2. (†) We are cho - sen, God, by
to Response



1. do, for your love we trust in you.
2. you. Bless us God, we trust in you.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



Sing prais - es to the Lord, al - le - lu - ia, sing praise to greet the
Word, al - le - lu - ia! The Word is God's truth and it
lives in our hearts, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

GOSPEL: *John 17:11-19*

This is a reading from the Gospel of John.

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed,

Most holy God,
protect these people you have given to me.
Keep them true to your name
so that they may be united as one
just as you and I are one.

Since I have been with them,
I have taken care of them,
and I have kept them true to you.
Now I am coming to you.
But while I am still with them,
I am saying all of these things
so that they may be completely
filled with my joy.

[I taught them about you,
but the world hates them
because they believe in you.
Protect them from all evil.]

Your Word is Truth.
Make them holy
by keeping them true to your word.
[Just as you sent me into the world,
I have sent them into the world.
And now, I give myself completely for them
so that they may always be faithful to you.]

This is the Good News of the Lord.

Reader may omit text that appears in brackets.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Before the Gospel, tell the children that what we are going to hear is a prayer that Jesus said for his disciples. Jesus knew it was sometimes hard for them to live as he did and it would be even harder when he went to heaven. And so he prayed for them. This prayer is also for us, because we are his disciples. Let's listen to what Jesus prays.

After the Gospel, ask the children what Jesus prayed for.

Jesus prayed:

- that we would be true to God,
- that we would be united as one,
- that we would share his joy,
- that we would be protected from evil,
- that we would be holy,
- that we would be true to God's word,
- that we would be faithful to God.

Perhaps you will wish to write these on newsprint as the children recall them. Take each one separately, and ask what it might mean for them now. For example:

- What does it mean to be true to God? Can you give an example?
- What does it mean to be protected from evil? Can you give an example?
- What does it mean to be holy?

Help the children to relate these to their everyday lives. Help them see that being fair and courteous in sports, for example, is holiness.

Remind them that Jesus prayed this prayer for us. He truly wants these things for us. You might, if you have time, ask the children which of these is most meaningful (or important) to them now.

