

MAY 14, 2023
SIXTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER



Doing good through gentleness and reverence.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 14:15-21	The promise of the Holy Spirit
Monday	Acts 17:22-31	Paul in Athens
Tuesday	1 Peter 3:13-22	Suffering for doing right
Wednesday	Galatians 5:22-26	Fruit of the Spirit
Thursday	Acts 1:1-11	Jesus is taken up to heaven
Friday	Philippians 2:1-11	Imitating Christ's humility
Saturday	Psalms 66:8-20	Shout praises to God
Sunday	John 17:1-11	Jesus prays for his disciples

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. **1 Peter 3:15b-16a (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Loving God, help us to see the path to life and salvation in Christ's suffering and death and to see your chosen way to heal and make all things new. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, with this food that we eat and your love that we receive, give us strength to care for others with gentleness and deep respect. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Spirit of truth guide you into all things wise and loving.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Thy Holy Wings



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What action do you take when you are angry at or disagree with someone?
- How do you think Jesus would respond if he had a strong difference of opinion with someone?

DEVOTIONS

Read: 1 Peter 3:13-22.

Suffering happens. Life is sometimes painful. Followers of Jesus Christ can suffer "for doing what is right" (v. 14). Unfortunately, there are those who claim to follow Jesus and think that inflicting suffering is being a hero for "the truth." That's not the case for biblical truth and the way of Christ Jesus who "suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous" (v. 18). In being faithful to Christ and Christ's way of life, we are to be bold (a hero, one might say) and give "an accounting for the hope that is in you" (v. 15). However, this description that gives a defense of what a Christian may think and believe is not to be done with anger, threats, unkind acts, or any act of violence. A courageous disciple makes their defense "with gentleness and reverence" (v. 16). Christ's reign, unlike the powers of the present age, is built upon the power of self-giving love and service to others. It's the way of Jesus Christ, and it's the freeing power of the followers of Jesus Christ.

Discuss: How can being gentle and reverent show more courage than an act of violence?

Pray: **Almighty God, help us to see in Jesus Christ not only the way of salvation but the way of life that witnesses to Christ with gentleness and reverence. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you reach out to and serve alongside others who think differently than you?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Faith is formed by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal, trusted relationships—often in our own homes. In John 14:15-21, Jesus gives us the promise of the Holy Spirit. As you continue reading the Gospel of John during the Easter season, highlight this reading. Then take time to write a list of people with whom you have a personal, trusted relationship.

Pray: **Lord Jesus, send the Holy Spirit upon me so that I may grow in my faith and form life-giving relationships. Alleluia! Christ is risen. Alleluia! Amen.**



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