

1-2-2022

## Fifth Sunday of Easter - 15 May 2022

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### Recommended Citation

Tedesco, Joe. "Fifth Sunday of Easter - 15 May 2022." *Pastoral Liturgy* 52, no. 2 (2021): 1-7. <https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/pastoral-liturgy/vol52/iss2/24>

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# 15 May 2022

## Fifth Sunday of Easter

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

### Introduction

This and next week's Gospel readings are taken from Jesus' Last Supper discourse. Jesus is about to die and is preparing his disciples who are struggling to make sense of this coming event. The teaching is also a proclamation to the Church which comes after, to our present age. We are to be Christ to our world by loving as Christ loves us. It is the marker of what makes one a follower of Christ, that we love sacrificially and with the genuine good of the other in view.

### Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus you are the ultimate gift of love.  
Lord, have mercy.

You loved us first so that we can love others.  
Christ, have mercy.

You became human so that we can be your disciples.  
Lord, have mercy.

### Collect

*The oration*

Almighty ever-living God,  
constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us,  
that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism  
may, under your protective care, bear much fruit  
and come to the joys of life eternal.

*Commentary by Gerard Moore*

This prayer is new to the Fifth Sunday in Easter, previously appearing in the revised missal as the collect for the Saturday of Easter Week IV: it has been promoted by a day. The text is from the liturgical books of Milan, though it was newly formed for the post Vatican II revisions by combining two ancient Milanese orations. The prayer begins immediately with the petition that God transform us constantly through the paschal mystery. In this sense it implores God that we bear the resurrection in our lives here and now and have its power shine forth in our actions. The grounds for

this are baptism, in which we were made anew. The reference is as salutary for the long baptised as it is for those newly baptised at the Easter vigil. Three further points are found in the prayer. Firstly, the unceasing care of the divine one is a requirement: all our efforts are only possible in grace, while the guarantee of God's fidelity is in the paschal mystery. Secondly, as Easter people we are called to bear fruit. Our lives in the paschal mystery work to bring forth the reign of God. Finally, a fruitful life lived in the paschal mystery is consonant with knowing the joys of heaven and celebrating them in eternity.

## **First Reading**

### **Acts 14:21–27**

The reading from Acts talks of how Paul and Barnabas, key leaders of the infant Church, revisit their established communities, continuing to proclaim all that God was doing through them.

## **Responsorial Psalm**

### **Psalm 145(144):8–13**

*I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. (v. 1) or Alleluia.*

We are invited to sing praise to the Lord whose love and compassion rests on all that exists.

## **Second Reading**

### **Revelation 21:1–5**

God is the beginning of all creation and, through Christ, all things that lead away from God, all death and destruction, are being 'made new'. A new creative blessing is bringing all things back to God.

## **Gospel Reading**

### **John 13:31–35**

In John's Gospel, Jesus proclaims as a single commandment; to 'love one another'. It is the marker of the true follower of Christ, that they know of and live out the love of Christ.

## **Reflection**

We live in a world of marketing and promotion. The rise of consumer capitalism and the desire for sellers of goods and services to have their products stand out from the

crowd is a constant struggle. Thus, much effort is put into branding; to catch phrases and slogans that make products easily recognisable and that communicate the benefits of that product to a potential consumer. We've come a long way in the world of product promotion. The marketers and advertising agencies have become more sophisticated over the years, but so have our sensibilities to the hype and fluff that surrounds branding and slogan making. Think of all the 'must see TV' that we apparently 'must see'. How can all of those shows claiming to be 'must see' actually be 'must see'. Is not some of it at least quite unconvincing, a time waster and not a 'must' at all? Though we can be easily fooled, we are coy of the claims of many brandings and slogans that circulate around us. We are suspect of such things and rightly dismiss them.

Then there are catch phrases and slogans that are quite clever, and actually communicate something truthful. A well-known figure in the advertising and marketing industry, Leo Burnett, once said 'The greatest thing to be achieved in advertising ... is believability, and nothing is more believable than the product itself.'<sup>1</sup> Though Burnett no doubt produced slogans that had little to do with the actual product, there is something inherently true in his statement. We are drawn to authenticity, and we are drawn to the good.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus is doing some branding himself. He is calling his disciples to be identified in a particular way. Something akin to a slogan is being stated by Jesus, and it is to 'love one another, as I have loved you'. This is how people will know who you are. This is how this small group of followers will stand out from the crowd and be identifiable. As the quote from Burnett indicates, the product itself is the primary form of advertising that is needed, and 'the product' in this case is the love of Jesus. If we love as Jesus loves, not only will it be identifiable, but it will also be believable. The love we show that is in keeping with Jesus' love is what will do the convincing. It will be enticing to a world that desperately needs the love of God.

That said, Jesus' words are not merely a slogan, a passing catch phrase that can be taken or left. It is a most substantive command. That Jesus is giving a commandment is putting him on par with the Lord God. It is something of a Christological statement of Jesus' equality with God that Jesus can give the commandment at all. It also elevates what is being said to a matter of absolute importance.

The importance firstly lies in the exemplar of Christ's self. Earlier in the Last Supper discourse found in John, of which today's reading is part, we see Jesus washing his disciples' feet. There Jesus points out 'I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do' (13:15). Throughout the extended dialogue that forms these chapters of John, Jesus is preparing his disciples for his parting. The 'hour has come' and the time for 'the glorification is at hand', that is the language that John uses to point to the Passion of the Lord and appears here in this

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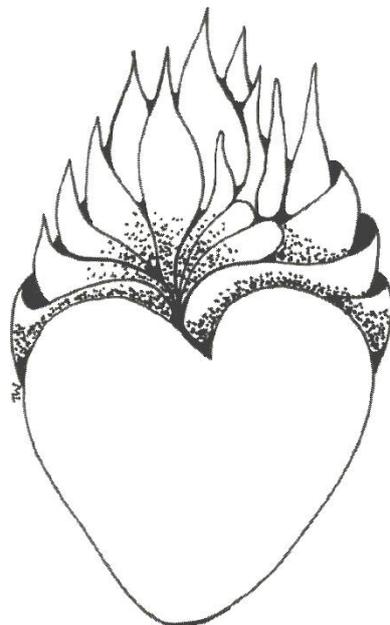
<sup>1</sup> Burnett, Leo. *Communications of an Advertising Man*. (Chicago: [Unknown Publisher], 1961), p. 78.

reading too. This is entirely what Christ is about and it is entirely what followers of Christ are to be about.

Secondly, then, the command to love is sacrificial. The love that the followers of Christ are to show is to be in keeping with this sacrificial call. It is to be entirely others centred, to be a laying down of one's life combined with a trusting in God that, in the Lord's power, it will be taken up again.

Thus, this love that Christ is commanding may be a form of branding, a branding of Jesus' self to be sure. But it does not share much else with consumer advertising culture. We live in a society that sees transactions between people as form of exchange; if I give up something, I expect something in return. Even when we look to be giving, we might often be thinking in self-serving terms. This can be true of love itself; we love with an expectation of reciprocation in some form.

The love Christ is calling us too clearly does not fit that mould – and it is also clearly not easy. True love is a difficult task. It can be easy to get caught up on the difficulty of the commandment; to love by giving one's life away. However, we need to hold the entire commandment in view; especially the 'as I have loved you' component. Implicit in this call to love, to make Jesus' presence real in the world, is to receive the love of Jesus in the first place. Thus, we realise as we reflect on this scripture that the God of Love wants to flow through us to our world. There are many 'commands' that we find in scripture, but this is a most fundamental one. It was the heart of Jesus' mission, and we pray that it can be the heart of our lives as well, to receive and give a love that overcomes all.



**Jesus, make our hearts  
burn with love when  
you speak.**

# Prayer of the Faithful

## Introduction

Father, with the psalmist we wonder at your regard for us, setting us free to sing a new song of rejoicing. Trusting in our relationship with you, and your love for us, we bring you our needs.

## Petitions

We pray for your Church and its leaders that we may bring about your New Jerusalem, making all things new, opening the eyes and hearts of us all to the needs and afflictions of all.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all members of the Plenary Council, and the committees and support workers who are preparing for the second Assembly. May they be infused with the Easter joy and be open to the Spirit in all their deliberations and activities.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our world, given by you. For those who play a part in its governance, give them your wisdom and self-discipline to refrain from misuse of power; remind them to govern for all peoples and for the good of all creation. May they distribute vaccines for the pandemic equitably and work positively in this time of climate change.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our community rejoicing in our Easter life. We thank you for the gift of Easter. Enable each of us to blossom to our unique fullness in you.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who have come to the end of their earthly life. Receive them in your love and embrace them. Be with those who mourn their passing and especially receive those whose death is known only to you.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those suffering from the effects of the pandemic; spiritually, financially, mentally and bodily. May they recover well and be renewed by the experience. We pray also for the all the frontline workers who care for those affected.

*(Pause)* Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

## Conclusion

Father, you have called us to be siblings dancing in the light of your Resurrection so that our living witness will draw others to you. As your children, we thank you for listening to our requests in the confidence that you hear them in the power of the Spirit and in the name of our brother Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

## Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

### GA

All the ends of the earth. B Dufford SJ. 420  
A new commandment. Unknown/ L Bartlett. 318  
Christ is alive, with joy we sing. P Stotter/ M Vulpius. 365  
Christ is made the sure foundation. J M Neale/ H Purcell. 640  
Christians, let us love one another. A Nigro SJ and M Foltz SNJM/ French Melody. 206  
God of peace. A Kelly CSsR/ C Willcock SJ. 553  
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ English Melody. 468  
Love divine, all loves excelling. C Wesley/ R Prichard. 463  
Love is his word. L Connaughton/ A Milner. 462  
No greater love. M Joncas. 460  
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 364  
Seek ye first. K Lafferty. 456  
Take and eat. J Quinn SJ/ M Joncas. 198  
This day was made by the Lord. C Walker. 356  
This is my will, my one command. J Quinn/SJ/ Gregorian Chant. 465  
Ubi caritas et amor/ Where true love and charity are found. Gregorian Chant. 319  
Ubi caritas. Taize. 324  
Unless a grain of wheat. B Farrell. 500  
Where there is charity and love. R Connolly. 323

### AOV1

All the ends of the earth. B Dufford SJ. 76  
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ English Melody. 54  
Seek ye first. K Lafferty. 48  
Sing to the Lord. O. Alstott. 46  
Unless a grain of wheat. B Farrell. 35  
This day was made by the Lord. C Walker. 183

### AOV2

God of peace. A Kelly CSsR/ C Willcock SJ. 138  
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 131  
O God, you search me. B Farrell. 31  
Sing a new song to the Lord. T Dudley-Smith/ Wilson. 76

### AOV4Kids

Sing to the Lord. N Ford. 104  
The Spirit lives to set us free. D Lundy. 95  
This is the day. Traditional melody. 159

### CWB

A new commandment I give unto you. 615  
Christians, let us love one another. Fr. A. Nigro/Sr. M. Claudia Folz. 648  
Love divine, all loves excelling. Charles Wesley, adapt. Anthony G. Petti. 740  
Whatever you do. Willard F. Jabusch. 860  
Where there is charity and love. Par. Richard Connolly. 863

## **CWBII**

*Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions*

A new commandment. John 13: 34, 35. 443

God of peace. Anthony Kelly CsrR. 546

Love divine, all loves excelling. Charles Wesley. 552

Love is his word. Luke Connaughton. 553

Where there is charity and love. Paraph. Richard Connolly. 638

Where true charity is dwelling/*Ubi caritas est vera*. Tr. ICEL. 639

*Additional selections by Chris deSilva*

Christians, let us love one another. Armand Nigro SJ/M. Claudia Foltz SNJM. 469

Christ, be our light. Bernadette Farrell. 540

No greater love. Michael Joncas. 622

## **S&S1**

I will lift up your name. Steve Angrisano. Tom Tomaszek. 91

## **S&S2**

The Lord is near/I will praise your name. Tom Booth. 285

## **Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy**

Psalm 144: *I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God./Alleluia.*

Psalm 144: J. Robert Carroll/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 307

Psalm 145 (144): Jenny O'Brien. JOBC pg. 46

I will praise your name. Tony Alonso. LPC pg. 64

## **Music selections by Michael Mangan**

Easter alleluia (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]

Sing new songs of joy (FWS, CWB II) *Based on Ps 97/98* [Gathering]

Forever I will sing (FWS) *Based on Ps 144/145* [Gathering, Gifts]

A life of love (TT/SYJ) [Gifts, Communion]

One body in Christ (Esp V5) (TWB) [Communion]



**Ring out your joy  
to the Creator.**