

Reflecting

On Sunday's Readings

May 2026

The following series is free, downloadable small-group materials based on each week's Mass readings and the seasons of the liturgical year. Each study provides an introductory reflection on some aspect of the readings or on personal spirituality. Each of the readings is provided along with a few questions designed to engage the heart and stimulate the group's discussion. These small-group materials will be provided on a continuing basis in monthly segments.

We would suggest the following 60-to-90 minutes format for the small group:

1. Open with a moment of quiet reflection and prayer.
2. Discuss the introductory reflection with a question or comment like, "What do you feel is important for us to grasp in this introduction?" or "What stood out to you from these opening paragraphs?" As the facilitator of the discussion be ready to share one or two things which were important to you from the introduction.
3. Have someone read the First Reading and ask several people to share their answers to the reflection questions. **Effective group-dynamic techniques should be used to further stimulate the discussion and affirm the participation.** (The booklet *A Facilitator's Guide* is available from Emmaus Journey to provide additional practical training for leading lively and informative small-group discussions.)
4. The Responsorial Psalm provides a reflective transition from the First Reading to the Gospel Reading, so have the Psalm read aloud. You may do this without additional comment, or you may want to draw their attention to something you feel is pertinent.
5. You can either read this week's Second Reading next and ask several people to share their answers to the reflection questions, or cover the Second Reading after you cover the Gospel Reading. The Second Reading does not always have a clear connection to the other Sunday Mass readings, **so do not feel like you need to force a connection.** However, you can provide an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to draw a connection by asking, "How do you see that this passage ties into the theme of the readings?"
6. Move on to the Gospel Reading, repeating the process by asking several people to share their answers to the reflection questions.
7. Approximately equal time for discussion should be given to each of the sections: Introduction, First Reading, Second Reading and the Gospel Reading. Obviously, if one section is especially stimulating, you should give some additional time to discussing it.
8. Close the discussion with group prayer, using various prayer formats.

We trust that God will use these materials to make His Word more meaningful to you, both within the small group environment and during Mass as you hear Scripture read and taught. **We would appreciate knowing if you are using the *Reflecting on Sunday's Readings*, and would welcome your feedback, either through the Emmaus Journey web page form, or by direct e-mail**

Sincerely,

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Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER—May 3, 2026

Introduction: This statement by Jesus that *he* is “THE Way, THE Truth, and THE Life” comes in the middle of a long discussion which began during a celebration that we commonly call The Last Supper. This last supper meal, and this discussion took place because Jesus was aware that the ministry he conducted while walking on earth was drawing to a close, and that he would soon depart out of this world to go to the Father. As the dinner ended and Jesus tells of his betrayal and begins to talk about his departure, a sense of heavy dread descends on the disciples.

Peter responds in John 13:36 with the question, “Lord, where are you going?” Shortly thereafter Thomas blurts out, “We do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” And Philip too expresses his anxiety with, “Lord show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” The air is thick with their feelings of anxiety, doubt and confusion. Feelings many of us have experienced at one time or another. We can learn a terrific lesson from these very human disciples, it is okay to cry out to Jesus with our fears, doubts, and confusion regarding important issues of life, death, and eternity.

The struggle these disciples were facing is one we all face when confronted with the departure of a loved one, a desire to stay together. Jesus knew this was the issue, that is why his first words of assurance were, “Let not your hearts be troubled,” and “I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am there you may be also.” This was the issue: Where you are Jesus, that’s where we want to be. The disciples realized during the short time they had been together, less than three years, that Jesus was unique. They had seen something in Jesus that they had not seen anywhere else nor in anyone else. They had experienced something akin to God. They didn’t understand it at this point, but they knew that Jesus was a unique link to the Father.

Here then is the second lesson we can learn. When we really experience Jesus, he will become the most important reality in our life. E. Stanley Jones points out, “A lot of people have just enough Christianity to make them miserable. They are not free to act according to the standards of the world, nor are they free, through lack of self-surrender, to do what the Christian way demands. They have just enough religion to create irritation and not enough to create iridescence.”¹ May the glow of our experience of Jesus increase in intensity.

St. Peter exhorts us to “Come to him, to that living stone...” to be built into a “spiritual house,” and a “holy priesthood.” The iridescence about which Jones spoke comes from having the Light of the World indwelling us and shining out of us to the world. The Light of the World in turn enables you, and I, to enter fully into the priesthood of our salvation and offer our lives as a sacrifice that will “declare the wonderful deed of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

If we could take time to read the remaining chapters of Jesus’ discourse, John 13-17, we would see that Jesus discussed the many provisions he made which would enable us, his disciples, to continue to experience his presence. Provisions that would remove the fears of his followers and give them hope, provisions that would both nourish and sustain their lives; namely, his Word, his Spirit, and the Eucharist. Though physically absent from walking the earth he remains for us “THE Way, THE Truth, and THE Life,” if we will but avail ourselves of him.

¹ From *The Way*, by E. Stanley Jones

First Reading — Acts 6:1-7

¹ Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. ² And the twelve summoned the body of ³ the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. ⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

⁵ And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch.

⁶ These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them.

⁷ And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

1. Describe the characteristics of a man or woman who is “full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.”

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19

¹ Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright. ² Praise the LORD with the lyre, make melody to him with the harp of ten strings ⁴ For the word of the LORD is upright; and all his work is done in faithfulness. ⁵ He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.

¹⁸ Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, ¹⁹ that he may deliver their soul from death, and keep them alive in famine.

Second Reading — 1 Peter 2:4-9

⁴ Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; ⁵ and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and he who believes in him will not be put to shame." ⁷ To you therefore who believe, he is precious, but for those who do not believe, "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner," ⁸ and "A stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall"; for they stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

2. What stands out the most to you about Peter's description of believers?

3. How does Peter define our mission as people of faith?

Gospel Reading — John 14:1-12

¹ "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me. ⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; henceforth you know him and have seen him."

⁸ Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves.

¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father.

4. What causes your heart to be troubled?

5. What assurances does Jesus provide to soothe his disciples' fears?

6. What is the primary truth in this exchange? Why is it important?

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER—May 10, 2026

Introduction “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. Who with the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.” So, we attest each Sunday. This amazing truth which is captured in such a succinct and profound statement, is amplified in the readings for this sixth Sunday of Easter.

Jesus, knowing that he was soon to leave his disciples, was concerned that they not feel abandoned, or in his words, orphaned. Jesus having lived among them for some years, and having experienced the increasing hostility of the world against the things of God, knew that not only would the disciples feel abandoned, but that they would have a difficult time following him and his manner of life. Jesus knew that it would become increasingly difficult for them to show their love through their obedience if they were left all alone. So, in his grace and foresight, Jesus interceded with the Father to send a Paraclete, a helper, one to come along beside them and live within them.

Perhaps the Holy Spirit's most important function is to indwell us. There, living within believers, he is enabling us to love and obey the Father and the Son. No matter where we go, or what we do, the Holy Spirit is committed to going there with us, and helping us love and obey. Sometimes he must be appalled by the places we go and the things we do, but he does not abandon us. Instead, he consistently speaks to our heart and mind, pricks and prods our conscience, and elicits our repentance and our conversion from within us. When in obedience we endeavor to do great things for God, whether simply the greatness of giving love and forgiveness to others, or more complex forms of dedicated service, he is there helping. It is the Holy Spirit who equips us with giftedness. He it is who takes our efforts and multiplies them beyond our ability. It is the Holy Spirit who gives wisdom, strength, courage, and comfort. What would we do without him?

“The Holy Spirit is the Lord and Giver of life, and it is he who sanctifies the soul. Is not the Christian a living temple of the Holy Spirit? And what a wealth of benefits to the soul comes with this indwelling of the Lord's Spirit!”¹

The Holy Spirit is also within us to equip us to witness and proclaim the knowledge of Jesus and the reality of his salvation. This is what the second reading refers to as, “to make a defense to anyone who calls you into account for the hope that is in you.” He equips us to be witnesses by reproducing his virtues and fruit within us. These qualities are what attracts non-believers' attention and whets their appetites for God. The Holy Spirit, throughout our life of growth, forms our understanding regarding Christ and the mystery of salvation so that we can adequately explain, in simple terms, how someone can believe and begin their journey of faith. The Holy Spirit is our hope, and he equips us to take that hope to the world.

On this Sixth Sunday of Easter let us pray, “Holy Spirit, God of light, fill us with your radiance bright; gentle father of the poor, make us, by your help, secure; come, your boundless grace impart bring your love to ev'ry heart.

“Light immortal, fire divine, with your love our hearts refine; come, our inmost being fill, make us all to do your will; goodness you alone can give, grant that in your grace we live.”²

¹ Pope John XXIII in *Journal of a Soul*.

² Verses 1 and 3, *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, from *The Liturgy of the Hours, Volume II*.

First Reading — Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

⁵ Philip went down to a city of Samaria, and proclaimed to them the Christ. ⁶ And the multitudes with one accord gave heed to what was said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs which he did. ⁷ For unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying with a loud voice; and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. ⁸ So there was much joy in that city. ...

¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, ¹⁵ who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; ¹⁶ for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

1. How did God provide for the spiritual development of these Samaritan believers?

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 66:1-7, 16, 20

¹ Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth; ² sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise! ³ Say to God, “How terrible are thy deeds! So great is thy power that thy enemies cringe before thee. ⁴ All the earth worships thee; they sing praises to thee, sing praises to thy name.” [Selah]

⁵ Come and see what God has done: he is terrible in his deeds among men. ⁶ He turned the sea into dry and; men passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him, ⁷ who rules by his might for ever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—let not the rebellious exalt themselves. [Selah] ...

¹⁶ Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for me. ...

²⁰ Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me!

Second Reading —1 Peter 3:15-18

¹⁵ ... but in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence; ¹⁶ and keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are abused, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing right, if that should be God’s will, than for doing wrong. ¹⁸ For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit;

2. Identify two principles of witnessing from this passage.
3. How do you see this admonition as applying to your life?

Gospel Reading —John 14:15-21

¹⁵ “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you.

¹⁸ “I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also. ²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

4. What is the relationship between love and obedience?
5. Which of these promises concerning love and obedience is most important to you?

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD SUNDAY—May 17, 2026
(Where the Ascension is transferred to Sunday)

Introduction: During the shooting at the high school in Littleton, Colorado, one young victim was asked by the murderers, “Do you believe in Jesus?” She answered, “Yes,” and was shot. At her funeral the pastor aptly referred to her as a present-day martyr. And so she was. No one probably told her two years earlier that by believing in Jesus she was choosing to share not only in his life, but also in his suffering. However, when she was called upon to do so, she did so bravely.

We all desire to share in the life of Christ, but we must understand that his is the life of a Suffering Savior. When Jesus called the disciples, they did not receive an explanation of what lay ahead. They experienced the dust and grime of his travels and the joy and amazement of his miracles. They delighted in the wisdom of Jesus’ teachings, their increasing understanding, and in the glory that came with being a part of Jesus’ entourage. But they also experienced the judgment and hostility leveled at Jesus by his malefactors, and eventually the threat of death associated with his crucifixion.

With Jesus’ resurrection, and the subsequent indwelling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost they took on his life in new ways. No longer were they simply accompanying him on his journey of ministry, now they were providing the teaching and miracles as Jesus lived out his life through them. The hostility which was previously directed at Jesus was still directed at him, only now he was indwelling their bodies and the hostility had to go through them to get to him. Yet they never faltered, never thought of exchanging his life for escape. Rather they gloried that they were able to share in his suffering knowing that his power was resting on them. The following anonymous poem says it well.

“But as the Master so shall the
servant be,
And pierced are the feet that
follow me.
Can he have followed far,
who has no wound, no scar?”

Jesus prayed that we wouldn’t be taken out of the world, thus escaping its misery and pain, but that we would be kept while in the world, making his life present to those experiencing the misery and pain of this world. As the Gospel reading points out, Jesus was given all authority in heaven and earth. From this position of Lordship and authority he tells his disciples, and subsequently those of us who have joined ourselves in baptism to them, to “Go ... and make disciples.” This command is not known as the “Great Suggestion” but rather as the “Great Commandment.” It is and should be authoritative in our lives.

Jesus not only faithfully calls us to various tasks in this mission of evangelization but he also provides the means for our accomplishing it. We see this in the first reading where Jesus affirms that he will send to them, and to us, the promised Holy Spirit who will provide the power to live for him, to witness of him, and if necessary, to die for him. The Holy Spirit’s transforming power changes us from self-centered, self-preserving individuals into people whose ultimate purpose is to “serve the living and true God.” (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

As we prepare for this “Ascension of the Lord” Sunday we need to picture ourselves standing there watching him ascend into heaven, and once again hear his voice, “You shall be my witnesses.”

First Reading — Acts 1:1-11

¹ In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. ⁴ And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me, ⁵ for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.” ⁹ And when he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing

into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

1. What areas of your witnessing responsibilities do Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria encompass?

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 47:1-2, 5-8 (47:2-3, 6-9 NAB)

¹ Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! ² For the LORD, the Most High, is terrible, a great king over all the earth.

⁵ God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. ⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! ⁷ For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm! ⁸ God reigns over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

Second Reading — Ephesians 1:17-23

¹⁷ ... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; ²² and he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all.

2. How do you think this prayer of St. Paul's is accomplished in Christians' hearts today?

3. What is the relationship between possessing this wisdom and enlightenment and having a heart to tell others about Jesus and salvation?

Gospel Reading — Matthew 28:16-20

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”

4. These were the last words the Lord spoke prior to his Ascension. Why should that fact be important to us?

5. This command was given to the Apostles, and thus to the Church. Inasmuch as you are also part of “Church” how should, or how are you, responding to this command?

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

PENTECOST SUNDAY—May 24, 2026

Introduction: Jesus' gift of the Holy Spirit, was the greatest gift he could have left the Church. Mary and the other disciples waited and prayed patiently for the filling of the Holy Spirit. Though they did not fully understand the significance of the Holy Spirit prior to his indwelling, they knew that it was a gift from the Father and the Son, and powerfully important. So they waited and prayed.

This Pentecost it is important to evaluate our own hunger and longing to be filled by the Holy Spirit. Do we want him to fill our life? Do we want his influence in us enough to regularly pray and ask him to fill our lives? Do we want the effects which his filling will bring, the positive changes in our life? Or are we satisfied to simply have the assurance that we have been made children of God, and beyond that would prefer not to be bothered? These are difficult questions, our response to them is almost as important as was our initial decision to respond in faith to Jesus. How we welcome the Holy Spirit in our life will make all the difference in how we experience and enjoy the Christian life.

Fr. Frank P. DeSiano, C.S.P., in the book *Presenting the Catholic Faith* explains why the Holy Spirit is so important to our lives as believers. "The Holy Spirit did not get revealed in the same way as Jesus. God is revealed in Jesus in a human life itself. The Spirit, taking the form of fire or dove used these only as symbolic images to dramatize his presence and power. (Acts 2:3; Matthew 3:16) For that is how the Spirit was revealed, ultimately: as presence and power in Christian life . . .

"The Spirit was the force by which they lived, by which they continued to do the deeds of Jesus, by which they were able to bring to birth the ideal that Jesus embodied. The Spirit helped them speak, helped them pray, helped them heal, helped them forgive, helped them serve, helped them be faithful. For on their own, they could do nothing but live as they always had."

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Holy Spirit is the "vital force" that makes the Christian life "Christian," and not simply another nice life. He not only provides the power to overcome that which holds us back from living a holy life, he provides the gifts and power to far surpass that which we could accomplish on our own.

As we contemplate the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives it is important that we recognize that his presence is a unifying presence and not simply an individualistic presence. By that I mean that though he gives gifts to us individually, and does for each of us all of those things of which Fr. DeSiano reminds us, he does those things for us because we are part of a whole, the Church, his visible body on earth. In the Scripture passages we will hear at mass this Sunday, the focus is on the unifying presence of the Holy Spirit. They show how he took the diversity of people and melded them into one body. How the Holy Spirit enables the many members to function for the common good of the one body. When we amplify our individual experience of the Holy Spirit to the exclusion of the Body we do him a disservice.

His abiding presence also provides companionship as we go through life. Often his presence is manifest through the physical presence of another member of the Body in whom he dwells. With the Holy Spirit we are never, never, ever, alone; God is with us, indwelling us.

Truly he is the all surpassing Gift proceeding from the Father and the Son, to us. The question is how well will we allow him to live unquenched in our lives?

First Reading — Acts 2:1-11

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. ⁷ And they were amazed and wondered, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

1. How was the filling of the Holy Spirit manifest?

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 104:1, 24, 29-31, 34

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, thou art very great! Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, ...

²⁴ O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy creatures....

²⁹ When thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed; when thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust. ³⁰ When thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground. ³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure for ever, may the LORD rejoice in his works, ...

³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD.

Second Reading — 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13

³ Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus be cursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ...

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

2. What are several ways in which we experience the Holy Spirit’s presence?

3. How does the Spirit contribute to unity among believers?

Gospel Reading — John 20:19-23

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.” ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

4. Why was it necessary for Jesus to give the Holy Spirit?

5. What are the implications of, “As the Father has sent me, so send I you”?

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY—May 31, 2026

Introduction: The Holy Trinity is an integral part of our faith, the understanding of which is often under emphasized. Holy Trinity Sunday was introduced into the church by Pope John XXII in the 1300's to honor the Trinity of Persons in God. Throughout the Scriptures we see various passages which bring out the reality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, their unity, and the various roles they fulfill to accomplish their will.

Ephesians 4:4-6 is one such passage; "There is one body and one Spirit, ... one Lord, ... one God and Father of us all." As in this passage, an overriding characteristic of the Holy Trinity is their unity and oneness. The Holy Trinity is united in bringing about our salvation, as we see in Ephesians 1:1-14, and united in bringing about our unity and oneness. Interestingly, this unity and oneness of his Body is integral to advancing the Gospel. How scandalous it is for us who name the name of Christ, to live with, and in some cases foster ungodly divisions among ourselves. The following quote from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reveals the importance of this oneness to the spread of the Gospel. "Thus, the Church confesses, following the New Testament, 'one God and Father from whom all things are, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and one Holy Spirit in whom all things are'. . . Hence the whole Christian life is a communion with each of the divine persons, without in any way separating them. Everyone who glorifies the Father does so through the Son in the Holy Spirit; everyone who follows Christ does so because the Father draws him and the Spirit moves him."

How can we honor the Holy Trinity? First and foremost is by cooperating with the Trinity in the work of salvation. If we have ever held back a part of ourselves from fully believing and surrendering to Christ and his gracious offer of salvation for us, if we have consented only with our head and not our heart and will, we can honor the Holy Trinity by a simple prayer of surrender and welcome.

Those of us who have already done so, can pause and reflect on our previous commitment, asking the Holy Trinity to reveal to us areas where we need to conform to the Father's will in different or deeper ways. Perhaps we can ask the Holy Spirit to show us how we might be more actively involved in the Trinity's work of bringing the Good News of salvation to our world. In addition, we can pause to offer a special prayer of thanksgiving for the Holy Trinity's presence in our life, and tell the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit of our love for them.

"O my God, Trinity whom I adore, help me forget myself entirely so to establish myself in you, unmovable and peaceful as if my soul were already in eternity. May nothing be able to trouble my peace or make me leave you, O my unchanging God, but may each minute bring me more deeply into your mystery! Grant my soul peace. Make it your heaven, your beloved dwelling and the place of your rest. May I never abandon you there, but may I be there, whole and entire, completely vigilant in my faith, entirely adoring, and wholly given over to your creative action."¹

¹ Prayer of the Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity, taken from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

First Reading — Exodus 34:4-6, 8-9

⁴ So Moses cut two tables of stone like the first; and he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand two tables of stone. ⁵ And the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶ The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ... ⁸ And Moses made haste to bow his head toward the earth, and worshiped. ⁹ And he said, "If now I have found favor in thy sight, O Lord, let the Lord, I pray thee, go in the midst of us, although it is a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thy inheritance."

1. Contrast this passage's description of God with Moses' description of the people of God.

Responsorial Reading — (Ps) Daniel 3:52-55

⁵² Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers, praiseworthy and exalted above all forever; And blessed is your holy and glorious name, praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages. ⁵³ Blessed are you in the temple of your holy glory, praiseworthy and glorious above all forever. ⁵⁴ Blessed are you on the throne of

your kingdom, praiseworthy and exalted above all forever. ⁵⁵ Blessed are you who look into the depths from your throne upon the cherubim, praiseworthy and exalted above all forever.

Second Reading — 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

¹¹ Finally, brethren, farewell. Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss. ¹³ All the saints greet you.

2. What cause and effect relationships do you see in this verse?

3. Which aspect of St. Paul's admonition stirred your heart?

Gospel Reading — John 3:16-18

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

4. How does this passage differentiate between God's part, and our part, in seeing this promise fulfilled.

5. What are some synonyms for "believe"?

6. How is believing in Jesus, different than believing about some other historical figure?