

## **Fifth Sunday of Easter**

**May 3, 2026**

**A holy nation.**

**We devote ourselves to prayer.**

**The way, truth, and life.**

**rvb.**

- 1. “Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop away from you like the leaves of Autumn.” John Muir.**
- 2. “You cannot find peace by avoiding life.” -Michael Cunningham.**
- 3. “What is a friend? A single soul dwelling in two bodies.” -Aristotle.**
- 4. “Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you cannot practice any other virtue consistently.” -Maya Angelou.**
- 5. “Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength.”**
- 6. “Life appears to me too short to be spent in nursing animosity or registering wrongs.” -Charlotte Bronte.**
- 7. “And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.” -Paulo Coelho.**
- 8. “What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.” -Ralph Waldo Emerson.**
- 9. “Love is so short, forgetting is so long.” -Pablo Neruda.**
- 10. “You can love someone so much...But you can never love people as much as you can miss them.” -John Green.**

---

**“It is in Jesus that we live, move, and have our being.” Acts 17:28.**

**Roger J. Vanden Busch.**

**Fifth Sunday of Easter**

**May 3, 2026**

**A holy nation.**

**We devote ourselves to prayer.**

**The way, truth, and life.**

**-rvb.**

**Reading 1**

**[Acts 6:1-7](#)**

As the number of disciples continued to grow,  
the **Hellenists complained against the Hebrews**  
because their widows  
**were being neglected in the daily distribution.**

So the Twelve called together the community of the disciples and said,  
"It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table.

**Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men,  
filled with the Spirit and wisdom,  
whom we shall appoint to this task,  
whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer  
and to the ministry of the word."**

The proposal was acceptable to the whole community,  
so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit,  
also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas,  
and Nicholas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

They presented these men to the apostles  
who prayed and laid hands on them.

The word of God continued to spread,

and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly; even a large group of priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

### **A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.**

In the reading from Acts, there is a difference of “opinion” between the Hebrew and Greek speaking members of the community. The Greeks complained that some were being left out when it came to the daily distribution of food.

**Hellenists complained against the Hebrews**

because their widows

**were being neglected in the daily distribution.**

“Recognized as both a gifted chef and a humanitarian, José Andrés has captured the hearts and minds—and palates—of people worldwide. Just try browsing his name on the internet: countless stories, videos, and reviews of Andrés’ restaurants, awards, books, and charitable ventures tell the story. Andrés is a man on a mission: to glorify food and to feed the hungry.

Despite his expanding culinary empires, Andrés may be best known for his outstanding humanitarian work that has fed millions of the hungry worldwide. In response to the 2010 earthquake crisis in Haiti, Andrés

formed a group called the [World Central Kitchen](#). Comprised of cooks and with the goal of providing food to people affected by disasters, the group has organized meals in Guatemala, Indonesia, Colombia/Venezuela, Mozambique, plus going to California fires and to Florida and North Carolina hurricanes. “We only go when we feel people are hungry. Twelve million people around the world are always in hard situations,” he said, adding these include fires, tornadoes, and earthquakes.

But, said Andrés, what drives his cooking passions and humanitarian efforts has always been his Catholic faith. “My faith has a lot to do with my life,” he said. “I was raised in a Catholic family that was always helping and feeding people. ...As a little boy going to religious classes, I thought Jesus was so cool. He could do so much like make breakfast for fishermen. Jesus cooked it himself.”

It is the ministry of the Word, service to others, and the work of the Spirit that solves the differences. Secondly, with the appointment of the first deacons, we learn that all service for God, no matter how practical it may be, requires the influx, infilling, and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We are prone to separate our tasks pertaining to them as sacred or secular. A

**further lesson to be gleaned from this reading is our ministry, irrespective of its nature, can only be effective as we give ourselves to prayer, bible study, and Spirit inspired testimony of the community.**

**The author is dealing with the practical side of life while striving to maintain the fundamental reason for their existence – “It is not right for us to neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables.” How does one maintain a balance between work/ministry and prayer? The answer is hinted at: better organization, more effective distributions of tasks and responsibilities within a spiritual outlook toward life. Having a spiritual frame of reference or reverence develops and nourishes our faith, confidence, and trust, and reduces the intensity of toxic, worrisome emotions, and destructive behaviors. As important, their spirituality is anchored in the fellowship, community, service to others, and worship associated with their church, synagogue, temple, mosque, or prayer groups. For others, the spiritual grounding of their lives may be found in communion with nature, or through their love for family, friends, neighbors, or through service to others. Thomas Merton, speaking hours before his death affirms the inner dynamics of the Acts of the Apostles, “The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence**

**of all living beings, which are all part of one another, and all are involved in one another.”**

### **Responsorial Psalm**

#### **Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19**

**R. (22) Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.**

**or:**

**R. Alleluia.**

**Exult, you just, in the LORD;**

**praise from the upright is fitting.**

**Give thanks to the LORD on the harp;**

**with the ten-stringed lyre chant his praises.**

**R. Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.**

**or:**

**R. Alleluia.**

**Upright is the word of the LORD,**

**and all his works are trustworthy.**

**He loves justice and right;**

**of the kindness of the LORD the earth is full.**

**R. Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.**

**or:**

**R. Alleluia.**

**See, the eyes of the LORD are upon those who fear him,**

**upon those who hope for his kindness,**

**To deliver them from death**

**and preserve them in spite of famine.**

**R. Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.**

**or:**

**R. Alleluia.**

### **Reading 2**

#### **1 Peter 2:4-9**

**Beloved:**

**Come to him, a living **stone**, rejected by human beings**

but chosen and precious in the sight of God,  
and, like living stones,  
let yourselves be built into a spiritual house  
to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices  
acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

For it says in Scripture:

*Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion,  
a cornerstone, chosen and precious,  
and whoever believes in it shall not be put to shame.*

Therefore, its value is for you who have faith, but for those without faith:

*The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone, and  
A stone that will make people stumble,  
and a rock that will make them fall.*

They stumble by disobeying the word, as is their destiny.

You are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood,  
a holy nation, a people of his own,  
so that you may announce the praises" of him  
who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

### **A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.**

In this reading from Peter, the nature of the Church is suggested in the metaphor of the spiritual house constructed on the living stones of believers. This spiritual house is further described as a race, priesthood, nation, and people. This is one of the more meaningful, solid, and comprehensive interpretations of the Church in the New Testament.

**In my rock/stone gardens, I have stacked 20 Cairns whose history goes back thousands of years. Cairns were built to help pilgrims navigate along the way in Scotland and Ireland. In my garden, each Cairn is 3 to 5 stones stacked upon one another. What is the spiritual significance of rock Cairns? The act of balancing rocks—finding particles chipped off the same boulder that nature shaped and allowing them to find harmony—can reflect our own quest for inner balance. When we place the third, fourth, or fifth rock atop, it signifies completion, the circle of life, or even the Holy Trinity in Christian belief. Whether you stack rocks or just observe someone stacking rocks, it can have a spiritual meaning such as:**

**1) You will have Balance in life; 2) You need to have Patience; 3) A message of gaining Strength; 4) Be Aware and Careful of your Actions; 5) A message of Helping People; 6) Indicates Growth in Life; 7) Believe in Unity; and 8) You will have Peace in Life.**

**Alleluia**

**[John 14:6](#)**

**R. Alleluia, Alleluia.**

**I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord;  
no one comes to the Father, except through me.**

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

## Gospel

### John 14:1-12

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Do not let your hearts be troubled.

You have faith in God; have faith also in me.

In my Father's house there are many dwelling places.

If there were not,

would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?

And if I go and prepare a place for you,

I will come back again and take you to myself,

so that where I am you also may be.

Where I am going you know the way."

Thomas said to him,

"Master, we do not know where you are going;

how can we know the way?"

Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me.

If you know me, then you will also know my Father.

From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him,

"Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us."

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you for so long a time

and you still do not know me, Philip?

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.

How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?

The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own.

The Father who dwells in me is doing his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me,

or else, believe because of the works themselves.

Amen, amen, I say to you,

whoever believes in me will do the works that I do,

and will do greater ones than these,

because I am going to the Father."

**A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.**

**A scientist made a discovery that certain caterpillars always follow the caterpillar in front of them looking neither to the left or right. She then placed six caterpillars on the rim of the dish. They continued to follow one another, day after day, and night after night until they died from exhaustion and starvation. Food and water were less than an inch away, but they never bothered to look beyond the rim of the dish. In the Gospel, Thomas sounds lost and confused, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus is not going “nowhere in circles.” He invites us to break free from the eternal monotony of life without direction.**

**If we look to the left, we hear the first reading from Acts as Luke wrestles with the question of inequitable distribution of food. How can this problem be solved? It is through the ministry of deacons who are to minister to those in need. However, our ministry can only be effective to the degree that we give ourselves in prayer, ponder the scriptures, and be open to the “infilling” of the Holy Spirit. New and exciting events are happening in the community as spirit-filled members feel moved to reach out. The circle of service is gradually encompassing more individuals into this burgeoning and service-filled church. If we**

look to the right, the reading from Peter reflects our growth in holiness. If we are going to follow anyone, follow Jesus. He is the rock upon whom we are created into living stones, strengthened and enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

Today's Gospel meets a three-fold need for when we feel ourselves going in endless, monotonous circles without purpose and direction, Jesus says: "" I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me." When we are lost. Jesus is the Way; when we err, He is the Truth; and when we are dead, Jesus is the fullness of life. The overall perspective of this chapter is Trinity in unity. We are to have faith in Jesus, faith in heaven, and faith in His return. Philosopher Pascal wrote in his Pensées: "Not only do we understand God through Jesus Christ, but we understand ourselves only through Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus, what we know is neither our life nor our death, neither God nor ourselves."

**Final Prayer:** God, your son Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life who sets us free. May your Holy Spirit guide us as we seek to know the fullness of your life, love, mercy, and forgiveness. Amen.

**Roger J, Vanden Busch wishing blessings of peace, health, happiness,  
and holiness upon you and your loved ones.**