

“Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?”
 Simon Peter answered him,
 “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”
 Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.”
 - John 21

Guide for Seventh Week of Easter: May 4 - 10, 2008

Seventh Week of Easter

The **Seventh Sunday of Easter** sets the tone for next week's Pentecost Sunday as we read in **Acts of the Apostles** of Mary, the Apostles and other followers waiting in the upper room after the Ascension. In **John's Gospel**, Jesus prays to the Father, claiming us as his own: “I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me.”

The first reading continues from the **Acts of the Apostles**. We are following the preaching and ministry of Paul. We can feel his intensity as he urges the Ephesians to follow his example in living the faith “I served the Lord with all humility and with the tears and trials that came to me...” He returns to Jerusalem to face persecution but remains under house arrest, teaching and meeting with followers.

The gospels are from **John's Gospel**, chapter 16. Jesus warns his disciples that they will be scattered and says they will find trouble in the world but assures them he has conquered the world. Jesus' prayer reflects the passionate, inseparable nature between he and his Father. “I glorified you on earth by accomplishing the work that you gave me to do.” “I pray ... that they may all be one ... as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us.” Jesus challenges Peter three times to “feed my sheep” and the Easter season comes to a close as **John's gospel** concludes on Saturday. These poetic readings end: “There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described

Daily Prayer This Week

We can hardly believe the message from this week's gospel. It is one of complete invitation to us. Jesus tells us of his intimate bond with the Father and invites us into the same kind of close relationship with Jesus himself.

He does not promise us a trouble-free life, and is clear about the challenges we will face as his followers. He cautions us that the world will want to make us one of “its own” and Jesus lovingly protests that we are his, not the world's. He prays to the Father of us, “they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me...”

This kind of loving dialogue with the Father is what Jesus wants with us. It does not mean our lives will be trouble-free but we are offered the peace in our hearts that Jesus longs to give us.

Some days we may feel anything but peace in our hearts. That is the time to pause and open our hands and our hearts to the Lord. Just the simple physical act of opening our hands can send a signal to our hearts. We can stop thinking and start feeling the love that Jesus has for us.

We can begin each morning at the side of our beds, aware of the sacredness of the day ahead of us, and ask for peace, courage and guidance. On our way to work or while taking care of our family, cooking or running errands, we can stop for the briefest moment and ask again: “Lord, help me to feel how much you love me. Help me to accept that love and carry it to all those you send into my life today.”

And at the end of the day, we can pause again at the side of our bed, reflect for a moment on our day and offer thanks for the moments where we felt in our hearts the love of Jesus. And, we can ask that tomorrow we can feel the Lord's own love and compassion for us - and beg that

individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written."

Sunday, May 11 is **Pentecost Sunday**, as the readings and the whole Church celebrate the coming and ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit among us. Jesus breathes on his jittery followers and tells them, "Peace be with you" and fills them with courage.

we can pass that along.

Like Peter in Friday's gospel, we have denied Jesus many times in our lives but he looks at us again with love and simply says, "Follow me."