

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Year C
May 22, 2022

Acts 15:1-2, 22-29
Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8
Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23
John 14:23-29

Assembly

(An unlit candle, a Bible opened to this week's gospel and a headscarf rest on a table in the meeting place.)

Beginning Prayer

(The candle is lit. Members form a circle and join hands as they silently focus on God's presence. Following a short time of reflection, members alternate reading the following prayer aloud. After the prayer is read, members may add personal intentions.)

All: O God, let all the nations praise you!

I: May God have pity on us and bless us;
may he let his face shine upon us.
So may your way be known upon earth;
among all nations, your salvation.

All: O God, let all the nations praise you!

II: May the nations be glad and exult
because you rule the peoples in equity;
the nations on the earth you guide.

All: O God, let all the nations praise you!

I: May the peoples praise you, O God;
may all the peoples praise you!
May God bless us,
and may all the ends of the earth fear him!

All: O God, let all the nations praise you!

Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8

LISTEN TO THE LORD

(The scriptures are read aloud with a pause after each reading. After the gospel is read, the leader invites members to choose a few words from the gospel that touch them.)

*The leader asks these two questions with a pause between them: “**What does this gospel say to you?**”, “**How does this gospel affect you in your life?**” The community silently reflects on these questions. The leader invites members to share their thoughts about the Insights and Reflection Questions for the week in a single group or within smaller groups.)*

Insights

A young woman on Facebook recently posted a story about her battle with cancer and her impending death. She had gone through numerous treatments and was told that they could not do anything more for her. The selfie she posted was an image of a beautiful but very thin young woman with a scarf covering her head and clear blue eyes that shone with her inner light. In her post, she explained the terminal diagnosis and then proceeded to assure her viewers that she accepted God’s plan for her and that she was looking forward to joining him in heaven.

She asked her friends not to be sad but to rejoice with her that she would soon be with Jesus. In the image, her eyes glowed brilliantly with her faith in the image and while her inspirational words were unexpected, they were peaceful and soothing.

The young woman’s attitude was the epitome of what Jesus expects from each of us. In this week’s gospel, he spoke of his own death and that his followers should rejoice for him that he would be returning to his father.

It takes strong faith to let go of the things of this earth to begin the final journey that awaits us all. When it is our time, some of us will be more graceful than others. Jesus told the

disciples not to let their hearts be troubled or afraid after he was gone. When our loved ones pass or when it is our time to leave them behind, we can focus on Jesus' soothing words of promise for a final journey that will return our loved one or ourself to him.

Reflection Questions

- ◆ What are some of the fears a person pondering their death may have?
- ◆ How have Jesus' words and actions before his death altered your concepts of how death might be approached?
- ◆ Have you ever been inspired by how a friend or relative dealt with their approaching death?

Suggestions for Action

- ◆ Offer a family member, friend or acquaintance support while dealing with the loss of a loved one.
- ◆ Spend time with someone you know who is sick or dying. Listen to them and be their friend.
- ◆ Keep the memory alive for those you have lost by lighting a candle for them at church.

HEAR THE LORD

(After about fifteen minutes of sharing, the leader poses these questions: “How has the sharing from this session affected you?”, “How will it change you this week?” The leader allows a moment for members to reflect before inviting them to share their thoughts.)

The leader reads a selection from the readings aloud. Following the reading, the leader poses these questions to the members: “What is Jesus saying to you?”, “What is your response?” The community pauses to reflect on these questions. After a time of reflection, the leader invites members to share what they hear Christ saying to them.)

Closing Prayer

(The leader plays the song “Rejoice” found at www.insightsbooks.com.)

Click on the Music link and select the appropriate week. After the song is complete, members alternate reading the following prayer.)

Rejoice!

I: He has risen to save us all
He waits for us in heaven
Until our appointed time
We rise to meet him
We wonder,
What will we find?

II: Blinded by light
Brilliant and true
Joy fills the place
In our heart
Where fear once lived

III: Worries left behind
Weightless and free
No burdens to carry
We continue to be

(Members exchange a sign of peace. The candles are extinguished.)

