

ST. JAMES PARISH CHURCH

READINGS FOR SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2025

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE COLLECT

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Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen.***

OUR HOMES AND FAMILIES

Heavenly Father, whose Son Jesus Christ, born of a woman, sanctified childhood and shared the life of an earthly home; bless the homes and families of our nation. Give to parents a true sense of responsibility in the care and training of their children, that our boys and girls may grow up in the fear of your Name and the fellowship of your Church, for the glory of Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

THE FIRST READING - ACTS 11:1-18

Peter has been instrumental in the conversion of a Gentile to Christianity. Cornelius, an officer in the Roman army, has received the Holy Spirit and has been baptised – as have members of his household. Peter

has now returned to Judea where members of the Christian community who are of Jewish origin seek an explanation as to why Gentiles have become Christians.

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Book of The Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 11, beginning at the first verse.

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called

Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

The Word of the Lord

The people: *Thanks be to God.*

PSALM 148

The whole of creation and all peoples join together in praise of the Lord.

1. Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; *
praise him in the heights.
2. Praise him, all you angels of his; *
praise him, all his host.
3. Praise him, sun and moon; *
praise him, all you shining stars.
4. Praise him, heaven of heavens, *
and you waters above the heavens.

5. Let them praise the Name of the LORD; *
for he commanded, and they were created.
 6. He made them stand fast for ever and ever; *
he gave them a law which shall not pass away.
 7. Praise the LORD from the earth, *
you sea-monsters and all deeps;
 8. Fire and hail, snow and fog, *
tempestuous wind, doing his will;
 9. Mountains and all hills, *
fruit trees and all cedars;
 10. Wild beasts and all cattle, *
creeping things and winged birds;
 11. Kings of the earth and all peoples, *
princes and all rulers of the world;
 12. Young men and maidens, *
old and young together.
 13. Let them praise the Name of the LORD, *
for his Name only is exalted, his splendor is over
earth and heaven.
 14. He has raised up strength for his people and praise
for all his loyal servants, *
the children of Israel, a people who are near him.
Hallelujah!
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son: *
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now: *
and shall be forever. **Amen.**

THE SECOND READING: REVELATION 21:1-6

The book of Revelation is “the revelation of Christ” made through John. It is prophecy which reveals secrets of heaven and earth. In a vision, John has seen the destruction of the old city, and of the old heaven and earth. Now he sees the new creation, of divine origin and free of evil forces – for ultimately God’s love will prevail.

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Book of the Revelation of John, Chapter 21, beginning at the first verse.

I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them as their God;
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them;
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the

spring of the water of life."

The Word of the Lord

The people: *Thanks be to God.*

THE GOSPEL - JOHN 13:31-35

Jesus is preparing his followers for his departure. After the Last Supper, he has washed the feet of his disciples, a symbol of servanthood. He has predicted his betrayal. Judas Iscariot has gone out into the night – a symbol of the dark deed he is about to commit.

Gospeler: *The Lord be with you*

All: *And also with you*

Gospeler: *A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.*

All: *Glory to Christ Our Saviour.*

At the last supper, when Judas had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

This is the Gospel of Christ
The people: Praise to Christ our Lord.

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