St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Sunday, May 10, 2020

Fifth Sunday of Easter

*Mother’s Day*

**Introduction to the day**

*As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today’s gospel includes Jesus’ promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father’s house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus’ mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.*

**Prelude**

P: Christ is Risen!

**C: He is Risen indeed! Allelulia!**

P: In the name of the Father,

and of the ☩ Son,

and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

[**Mothers’ Day Litany**](http://fatpastor.me/2015/05/06/mothers-day-litany/)

P: All who gather here are sons or daughters.

**C: We praise God for the women who gave us life.**

P: For mothers brave, strong, compassionate, full of wisdom and grace,

**C: We give God thanks and praise.**

P: For mothers vulnerable, worried, frustrated, and hurried,

**C: We pray for peace.**

P: For mothers who have died, that live no longer with us, but whose light shines on in our hearts and memories,

**C: We pray for those that mourn, and give God thanks for life eternal.**

P:  For mothers who grieve, who have lost children born or unborn,

**C: We weep with those with broken hearts.**

P: For those who are preparing emptier nests,

**C: We both celebrate and mourn with you, and hope their wings are as strong as their roots are deep.**

P: For stepmothers, navigating the pitfalls and joys of creating a new family,

**C: We pray for wisdom and patience.**

P: For Grandmothers who are doing the hard work of raising children again,

**C: We pray the caregivers have those who care for them.**

P: For those who are waiting and sometimes struggling with the biological process to bring new life, and for those who are waiting for adoptive process to be fulfilled.

**C: We wait eagerly with you, and offer you our hand to hold in the trial.**

P: For women who do not have children, but instead teach, lead, care for, and guide the children of others,

**C: We give God thanks and praise.**

P: For the mothers, sisters, daughters in our midst and around the world. For the women who, created in the image of God, give not just life, but abundant life. For women fighting, struggling, and sweating for the sake of others. For women caring, compassionate, and crying with the heart of Christ. For the caregivers, teachers, leaders, shepherds, healers. For Moms, in their wide variety and many forms,

**C: We give God thanks and praise.**

**Gathering Song*Lord God, We Praise You***

1 Lord God, we praise you, now the night is over,
active and watchful, standing here before you;
singing, we offer prayer and meditation;
thus we adore you.

2 Monarch of all things, fit us for your mansions;
banish our weakness, health and wholeness sending;
bring us to heaven, where your saints united
joy without ending.

3 All-holy Father, Son, and equal Spirit,
Trinity blessed, send us your salvation;
yours is the glory, gleaming and resounding
through all creation.

**Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

P: Let us pray

**C:** **Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**First Reading: Acts 7:55-60**

L: A reading from Acts.

*Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God’s word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.*

55Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56“Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” 57But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. 58Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” 60Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm: 31:1-5, 15-16 read responsively**

1In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame;
  deliver me in your righteousness.
 2**Incline your ear to me;**
  **make haste to deliver me.**
 3Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold;
  for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.
 4**Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me,**
  **for you are my tower of strength.**
 5Into your hands I commend my spirit,
  for you have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth.
 15**My times are in your hand;**
  **rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**
 16Let your face shine upon your servant;
  save me in your steadfast love.”

**Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:2-10**

A reading from 1 Peter.

*Christ is the cornerstone of God’s saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God’s chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.*

2Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—3if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.
  4Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and 5like 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. 6For it stands in scripture:
 “See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious;
 and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”
7To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,
 “The stone that the builders rejected
  has become the very head of the corner,”
8and
 “A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.”
They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.
  9But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
 10Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people;
 once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

L: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.**

**Gospel: John 14:1-14**

P: The holy gospel according to John.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

*On the night that he is to be arrested, Jesus shares final words with his disciples. As the one through whom God is known, he promises to go before them and act on their behalf.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 1“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. 2In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. 4And you know the way to the place where I am going.” 5Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” 6Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”
  8Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” 9Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. 12Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. 13I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

***Silence for meditation***

**HYMN OF THE DAY: *Jesus Loves Me!***

1 Jesus loves me! this I know,
for the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong,
they are weak, but he is strong.

Refrain
Yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me,
the Bible tells me so.

2 Jesus loves me! he who died
heaven's gates to open wide;
he will wash away my sin,
let his little child come in. Refrain

3 Jesus loves me! he will stay
close beside me all the way;
when at last I come to die,
he will take me home on high. Refrain

**Prayers of Intercession**

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

Build us up, mothering God, as living stones united in your spiritual house. Continually strengthen your church as it is sent forth to proclaim your love. We pray especially for new congregations and those in redevelopment. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

Humble us, creator God, as part of your creation. Fill us with respect and awe for the world you have made, including volcanoes, ocean currents, tropical rainstorms, glaciers, and other forces that both destroy and create. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

Align our ways to your love, O God. We pray for countries, leaders, and other organizations as they prepare places for those seeking refuge and safety (aid organizations may be named). Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

God of healing and rest, help those whose hearts are heavy and weighed down by many troubles. Comfort their suffering, ease their distress, and carry their burdens (especially). Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, we pray for those who tend and teach young children, for the safe pregnancies of expectant parents, and for families who struggle with infertility and miscarriage. We give thanks for all who have shown mothering care, and we remember all for whom this day is difficult. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

Generous God, you call into your brilliant light all who have died. Give us faith to take hold of the promise of your eternal life. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name,**

**thy kingdom come,**

**thy will be done,**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**and forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those**

**who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,**

**and the power, and the glory,**

**forever and ever. Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN: *Faith of Our Mothers* tune to Faith of Our Fathers**

Faith of our mothers, living still

In cradle song and bedtime prayer;

In nursery lore and fireside love,

Thy presence still pervades the air:

Faith of our mothers, living faith!

We will be true to thee till death.

Faith of our mothers, loving faith,

Fount of our childhood’s trust and grace,

Oh, may thy consecration prove

Source of a finer, nobler race:

Faith of our mothers, living faith,

We will be true to thee till death.

**Dismissal**

P: Christ is risen, just as he said.

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

**C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

**Postlude**

[**When God Created Mothers**](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/432284.When_God_Created_Mothers)**by**[**Erma Bombeck**](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/11882.Erma_Bombeck)

When the Good Lord was creating mothers, He was into His sixth day of "overtime" when the angel appeared and said. "You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one."
And God said, "Have you read the specs on this order?" She has to be completely washable, but not plastic. Have 180 moveable parts...all replaceable. Run on black coffee and leftovers. Have a lap that disappears when she stands up. A kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair. And six pairs of hands."

The angel shook her head slowly and said. "Six pairs of hands.... no way."
It's not the hands that are causing me problems," God remarked, "it's the three pairs of eyes that mothers have to have." That's on the standard model?" asked the angel. God nodded.
One pair that sees through closed doors when she asks, 'What are you kids doing in there?' when she already knows. Another here in the back of her head that sees what she shouldn't but what she has to know, and of course the ones here in front that can look at a child when he goofs up and say. 'I understand and I love you' without so much as uttering a word."

God," said the angel touching his sleeve gently, "Get some rest tomorrow...." I can't," said God, "I'm so close to creating something so close to myself. Already I have one who heals herself when she is sick...can feed a family of six on one pound of hamburger...and can get a nine year old to stand under a shower." The angel circled the model of a mother very slowly. "It's too soft," she sighed. But tough!" said God excitedly. "You can imagine what this mother can do or endure."

Can it think?" Not only can it think, but it can reason and compromise," said the Creator.
Finally, the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek. There's a leak," she pronounced. "I told You that You were trying to put too much into this model." It's not a leak," said the Lord, "It's a tear." What's it for?" It's for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, loneliness, and pride."

You are a genius, " said the angel. Somberly, God said, "I didn't put it there.”

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