

FREE DIGITAL
SAMPLE FOR
the week of
April 23, 2017

DAILY
UNIVERSAL
PRAYER
AND COMMENTARY

CELEBRATING

50

YEARS IN PRINT





SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2017

(Lec. 43)

- 1) Acts 2:42-47
- 2) 1 Peter 1:3-9
- 3) John 20:19-31

**SECOND SUNDAY
OF EASTER or
DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY**

FOCUS: Showing love and mercy to one another is a way of showing gratitude to God for his mercy toward us.

If Easter needs an exclamation point, Divine Mercy Sunday provides it. The death and resurrection of Jesus reveal the depths of God's mercy toward us. For by his death, Jesus won forgiveness for our sins and by rising, restored our life. In gratitude for all that we have received from God, let us go forth and treat one another with kindness and mercy.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today's first reading speaks of the early Christians living in community and showing great concern for one another. The Church grew as the Lord blessed their work. The second reading highlights the blessings of following Christ, even in times of trial. In the Gospel, the risen Jesus appears to the Apostles and sends them out to forgive sins and bring people to salvation.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Raised up to a newer and fuller life in Christ Jesus, let us come together to offer our petitions to him.

- 1) That God's mercy, poured out in and through Christ Jesus, may move all members of our Church, both clergy and laity, to be merciful and forgiving to others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That leaders around the world will work to protect the most vulnerable in their midst, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who suffer from chronic pain may find relief and solace through the compassion of their caregivers and the ever-constant love of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That each of us gathered here may be aware of God's mercy in our lives and acknowledge it gratefully, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may rest in peace eternally, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear our prayers. Help us to know your mercy and goodness as we strive to follow the example of Jesus. We ask these and all things through your son, Jesus Christ.





Monday, April 24, 2017 MONDAY OF

(Lec. 267)

SECOND WEEK

1) Acts 4:23-31

OF EASTER

2) John 3:1-8

(Opt. Mem. Saint Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Priest and Martyr)

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit will empower those who believe in the power of God.

The Holy Spirit gives us the courage to speak the word of God with confidence. Not all the teachings of Christ are easy to understand, so it is the Holy Spirit who gives us wisdom and sheds light on these difficult teachings. We must pray daily and be open to the promptings of the Spirit at all times.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the community of believers were overjoyed that Peter and John had prevailed against the Sanhedrin, and prayed that God would continue to enable them to speak his word. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that a person must be born anew by water and the Holy Spirit to enter the kingdom of God.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident in his loving mercy, we turn to our heavenly Father in prayer, presenting our needs and the needs of others.

- 1) For our Holy Father, that the Holy Spirit will continue to bless him with the grace and gifts needed to shepherd and guide the faithful in growing in holiness of life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, that they seek peaceful solutions to the persistent problems that plague our world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the poor and unemployed, that they may find strength in their faith and be blessed with the assistance they need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the sick, may they turn to Christ, the Divine Physician, for healing and strength, and be aided and comforted by those who care for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may be judged worthy of entering into eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, giver of all good gifts, hear and answer our prayers according to your most holy will. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.





Tuesday, April 25, 2017

SAINT MARK,

(Lec. 555)

EVANGELIST

- 1) Peter 5:5b-14
- 2) Mark 16:15-20

- FEAST

FOCUS: If we trust in God and follow his teachings, we will be saved.

Like the Apostles in today's Gospel, Saint Mark went out into the world to evangelize – to proclaim the Good News of the risen Christ – and he was met with both acceptance and resistance. Ultimately, we all have a choice between belief and unbelief, a choice to live with Christ through faith or to dwell in the darkness of sin.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, we are encouraged that, in spite of our human sufferings, God bestows on us the gift of faith and strengthens us with his grace so we live with humility and resist the power of evil. In the Gospel, Jesus charges the Apostles to proclaim his word to all people. We are reminded that all who believe and are baptized are charged with this same mission.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence that God will hear us, we humbly offer him our prayers and petitions.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we may be tireless in our determination to spread the word of God to all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all who serve in positions of leadership, that they might realize the power of their words and actions to set a course for peace and prosperity in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who dwell in the darkness of sin or unbelief, that they may open their hearts and minds to the light of Christ so they may be saved, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For each one of us, that we may remain firm in faith and strive to share the love of Christ with all whom we encounter, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and all who have died, that they may live in the light of God's eternal kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, you bestow your favor on the humble. Hear the prayers we offer you with humility, and strengthen us with your grace. Through Christ our Lord.





Wednesday, April 26, 2017

WEDNESDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER

(Lec. 269)

- 1) Acts 5:17-26
- 2) John 3:16-21

FOCUS: God the Father sent his son, Jesus, into the world so that all who believe might have eternal life.

Today's Gospel reminds us that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life. Let us ponder these words and allow them to penetrate our hearts so we never take for granted God's gift of salvation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the Apostles face trial for spreading the truth that Jesus is God. They are freed from prison by an angel of the Lord, who commissioned them: *take your place in the temple area* in order to continue the mission. In the Gospel, we hear a fundamental truth of our faith – that Jesus is the Son of God, sent so that *the world might be saved through him*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With humble hearts, let us join in offering our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For missionaries in the Church, that they will be blessed with the grace and strength needed to continue courageously preaching and teaching the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all those in public office, may they be strengthened in their call to meet the needs of those whom they serve in truth and integrity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world who are persecuted for their faith, may they stay true to the Gospel message and remain steadfast in their faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may we seek to alleviate suffering and poverty in the community around us by performing corporal acts of mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may they come to enjoy the fullness of life and love in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God our Father we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you through Christ our Lord.





Thursday, April 27, 2017

THURSDAY OF

(Lec. 270)

SECOND WEEK

1) Acts 5:27-33

OF EASTER

2) John 3:31-36

FOCUS: Whoever believes in Jesus will have eternal life.

God graciously gifts his people with love and compassion. And he is generous with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Let us, through our words and actions, strive to proclaim the blessings we have been given by our merciful God, and let the Holy Spirit work through us to help build up the kingdom of God.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of the Apostles continuing to preach in spite of warnings from the Jewish leaders. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that whoever believes in him will have eternal life, and that whoever does not believe and obey him will not enter into eternal life.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With faith and hope in our hearts, let us ask God, who is the giver of all good things, to hear our prayers.

- 1) For Church leaders, may they continue to be graced with the strength to spread the Gospel to those who have yet to hear and believe, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may they seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to promote nonviolent solutions to problems so that peace may reign more fully upon the earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the chronically ill, may they be comforted by the support of loved ones and know God's healing love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For parish families, may they strive to model the love and devotion of the Holy Family, and share that love with others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they enjoy eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear the prayers we bring to you this day. This we ask through Christ our Lord.





Friday, April 28, 2017

(Lec. 271)

1) Acts 5:34-42

2) John 6:1-15

**FRIDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
OF EASTER**

(Opt. Mem. Saint Peter Chanel, Priest and Martyr;
Saint Louis Grignion de Montfort, Priest)

FOCUS: The Lord Jesus provides food and drink for those who hunger and thirst.

The Lord wants to provide for all we need. Jesus shows us this when he provides food for the large crowd who was following him. In this miracle, which is found in all four Gospels, we see that Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks and then distributed the bread. With this in mind, let us remember the gift of Jesus we are given in the Eucharist.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, one of the Pharisees urged the release of the Apostles who had been detained. After being punished, the Apostles continued to preach the Good News of the Lord. In the Gospel, Jesus feeds a large crowd with five loaves of barley and two fish. This brought the people in the crowd to say: *This is truly the Prophet*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in God's providence, let us bring forth our petitions for our Church and for our world.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we strive to be constant and persistent in our prayer, drawing ever closer to Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in positions of leadership, may they turn to God for guidance and the courage they need to lead with integrity and honesty, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who do not have enough food for themselves and their families, may they be assisted by the outreach and helping hands of many, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who were received into the Church at Easter, may they feel truly welcomed by this faith community, and be inspired to witness to Christ always, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy perpetual light, happiness and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, hear our prayers and grant us the grace needed to lead lives that are holy and pleasing to you. We ask this through Christ our Lord.





Saturday, April 29, 2017

SATURDAY OF

(Lec. 272)

SECOND WEEK

1) Acts 6:1-7

OF EASTER

2) John 6:16-21

(OBL. MEM. Saint Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church)

FOCUS: Just as Jesus came to the aid of the disciples when they were in danger at sea, he will help us through our times of trouble.

When we are going through a rough time in life, assailed by troubles and trials, we can look to Jesus. He promised to be with us always. Just as he told the Apostles today, *Do not be afraid*, so we must turn to Jesus to give us the courage and perseverance to endure.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the Acts of the Apostles relates how seven men (now called deacons) were chosen to oversee the food distribution so that Gentile widows would not be neglected. Today's Gospel tells of how the disciples, while crossing the sea in the dark, became afraid when they saw Jesus walking on the sea. Jesus responds to calm their fears, saying, *It is I. Do not be afraid*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence and trust that God hears and answers our prayers, let us offer him our petitions.

- 1) That all members of the Church be faithful witnesses to God's goodness and love, and reflect it through our words and actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That government leaders throughout the world not be driven by a desire for power or privilege, but rather work to serve their people with humility and sincerity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That people who are suffering through difficult times may find strength, hope and solace in their faith, and be uplifted by the outreach of others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we in this parish may always welcome the stranger and be attentive to those in our midst who are hurting and in need of our support, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may come to join all the angels and saints in singing God's praises for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious Father, generously provide for all our needs. In your mercy, hear and answer our prayers through your son, Jesus Christ.

