

We Respond

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard; proclaim to the ends of the earth: The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 65)

ANTIPHON: Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

RESPONSE: Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Or **Alleluia.**

LECTOR: Cry out with joy to God all the earth, O sing to the glory of his name. O render him glorious praise. Say to God: "How tremendous your deeds!" **R.**

LECTOR: "Before you all the earth shall bow; shall sing to you, sing to your name!" Come and see the works of God, tremendous his deeds among men. **R.**

LECTOR: He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the river dry-shod. Let our joy then be in him; he rules for ever by his might. **R.**

LECTOR: Come and hear, all who fear God. I will tell what he did for my soul: Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer nor withhold his love from me. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them and we will come to them. Alleluia! **Or**

Alleluia, alleluia! The Lord said: I will not leave you orphans. I will come back to you, and your hearts will rejoice. Alleluia

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord, and I will ask the Father and he will send you another Paraclete, to abide with you for ever, alleluia.

TODAY'S READINGS Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; 1 Peter 3:15-18; John 14:15-21

NEXT WEEK (Ascension of the Lord, Year A) Acts 1:1-11; Ps 46; Eph 1:17-23; Mt 28:16-20

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God reigns through the Spirit



17 May 2020 6th Sunday Easter Year A

As we near the end of the Easter Season and approach Ascension and Pentecost, the liturgy contains a gospel reading that refers to the Holy Spirit. There is a promise of the coming of the Advocate, the Spirit of truth. There is a promise of the divine dwelling among us, the promise that the Spirit will be both with us, and in us.

The Advocate or the Paraclete is reflected in the various English translations of the noun *parakletos* for "comforter" or "counsellor". This noun derives from the Greek verb *parakaleo* which has many meanings including "to encourage", "to comfort and console" "to call upon for help" and "to appeal."

The Paraclete is not simply another name for the Spirit but is a way of describing the functions of the Spirit. What the Paraclete does is not new but is a continuation of the work of Jesus. God is present among the community of the faithful through the Spirit.

The coming of the Holy Spirit, therefore, crowns the promise of the divine presence. It is as though Jesus says, "Through the Holy Spirit I will be with you always. You will not be abandoned; you will not be orphans". The coming of the Paraclete ensures that the revelation of God in the incarnation does not end with Jesus' death and return to God. This Holy Spirit will continue Jesus' presence on earth.

In the face of their fear, anxieties, and despair, these promises are made directly to the disciples. Jesus assures them of new life and hope through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus offers his disciples the good news of the love of God and of the abiding presence of God with them, even when the circumstances of their lives seem most unpromising. Jesus speaks words of hope with the assurance of God's presence, so that the disciples can live a life shaped not by Jesus' absence, but by his unending presence.

God is always with us, and his presence will continue and grow despite our fears and distress. What Jesus promises provides endless resources for the life and faith of the church.

His promises give the church renewed strength and hope even when, we, as God's people, face the many difficulties and challenges of our day. Therefore, we shall not fear because we are in God's care.

The promises of divine presence are promises made, not to the individual, but to the community who lives in love. Those who live in love will experience God's presence in their midst. A relationship with God does not depend on physical presence, but on the presence of the love of God in the life of the community.

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