

*Our Lady of Peace Church*  
*May 15, 2022*



## 5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

“Love one another.”  
- Jn 13:34a



My dear friends

## **A new commandment, a new way of life**

Throughout this Easter Season, our first reading has been taken from the Acts of the Apostles, a spiritual history of the early church written by Luke. Luke stresses the work of the Holy Spirit, who watches over the fledgling community, strengthens Jesus' followers for a demanding and often dangerous way of life, and assists the Apostles in spreading the faith. In today's first reading, Acts 14:21-27, our focus is on the missionary journey of the one who had formerly persecuted the followers of Jesus—Paul.

In one of his letters, Paul acknowledges that he considers himself the least of the Apostles, precisely because of the persecution he had inflicted. But, firm in his new identity, he notes that he has worked harder than all the rest. Paul in fact went on three arduous voyages through much of the Mediterranean area, and Acts relates both his successes and his failures. Paul was driven, always wanting to go where no one had gone before, always wanting to bring the salvation offered in Jesus Christ to anyone and everyone who would listen.

Our passage thus reads like a travelogue, mentioning various population centers of the ancient world: Lystra, Antioch, Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, Attalia, and back to Antioch. Paul acknowledges the difficult times that converts would face. "They strengthened the spirits of the disciples and exhorted them to persevere in the faith, saying 'It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.'" Also, after Paul had founded church communities, and then moved on, he found the need to stay in touch with the places he had been. And thus he used letters, from which we read often in our liturgies, to strengthen, correct and guide the nascent Christian communities.

We find that the development of Christianity from a movement to an established church has begun. "They appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had put their faith." Also, we learn that it was in Antioch that Paul and his companions had been blessed by the community for their missionary voyage. They now return to Antioch. "From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now accomplished. And when they arrived, they called the church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles."

This report, of course, is crucial for the understanding of the history of the early church. Wherever Paul and his companions went, if there was a synagogue, they would begin their preaching there. If there was no synagogue, they would go to a place where the Jewish people would normally gather. Then, the Holy Spirit made it clear that the faith was to spread beyond the bounds of Judaism, as gifts of the Spirit became manifest among non-Jews. And thus it was that Paul became a special Apostle to those who had not been born or raised in the Jewish faith—those of gentile origin.

Our second reading, Revelation 21:1-5a, reports more of the visions of John. In our passage John sees that "the former heaven and the former earth had passed away...I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away.'"

In many ways, Revelation is a difficult book to read. It includes a great deal of strange, other-worldly imagery, and it contains visions of things that are to come, including the passing away of the world as we know it. Much of the imagery is symbolic, and meant to be understood only by the followers of Jesus Christ. Revelation was written at a time of horrible persecution in the church community, and John is offering his writing as an encouragement to remain faithful to Jesus Christ, even in the most difficult of circumstances. While it may not have seemed so at that time, the definitive victory over suffering and death had been won by the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and those who remain faithful have a glorious future to look forward to.

Our gospel reading, John 13:31-33a, 34-35, begins to prepare us for Jesus' return to the Father: "My children, I will be with you only a little while longer." And so, he wants to stress what is most important for his followers to remember. Of all his preaching and teaching, here is the core: "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." The "newness" of Jesus' love is its selfless, humble and sacrificial reaching out to others. And we are reminded that how we live and act has a tremendous impact. Either others will be attracted and become followers, or, if we are selfish, demanding and self-serving, be repelled. We have quite an example to follow—and a lot to live up to.





**Saturday, May 14**

4:00P *Helen Podlesny*  
by Joanna Saunders

**Sunday, May 15**

8:00A *Ted Croteau*  
by Marie & family  
10:00A *Jill Mackin Betters*  
by Carol Campbell

**Saturday, May 21**

4:00P *Louise Kervian* 42nd anniversary  
by Joyce Phillips

**Sunday, May 22**

8:00A *This year's Confirmation class*  
10:00A *Health & blessings for Fr. Stan*

**DAILY MASS**

**Monday, May 16**

8:00A *Lillian Couture*  
by her children

**Tuesday, May 17**

8:00A *Carolyn Prunier*  
by Paul

**Wednesday, May 18**

8:00A *No intention*

**Thursday, May 19**

8:00A *Robert Eaton* 4th anniversary  
by Pat & Sue

**Friday, May 20**

8:00A *Holy Communion Service*

**CONGRATULATIONS** to the recent winners of the Lucky Number Club: in February: Paul Prunier (1<sup>st</sup>), Dennis & Cyndee Grader (2<sup>nd</sup>), Greg & Chris Pellerin (3<sup>rd</sup>); in March: Charlotte Choleva (1<sup>st</sup>), Mary Choleva (2<sup>nd</sup>), Joan May (3<sup>rd</sup>); and in April: Mary Greene (1<sup>st</sup>), Gay Farr (2<sup>nd</sup>), Louis Socquet (3<sup>rd</sup>). The Lucky Number Club enables the parish's Justice and Peace Commission to respond to neighbors in need. For information call 413.863.2585.

**RECTORY WILL BE CLOSED** Monday, **May 30** in observance of Memorial Weekend.



**RCIA**  
A JOURNEY IN FAITH

The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) is the process by which an adult receives the necessary sacraments to be fully initiated in the Roman Catholic Church: Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist. Those who are not Catholic can become members of the Church by participating in this process. Anyone who is a baptized Catholic but has not received the other sacraments is also invited to complete this initiation. The RCIA team will begin meeting in September with Inquiry Sessions for anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic Church or who wants to receive these sacraments. There is no pressure or commitment. If you want more information, call Marguerite at 863.5397.



The Archdiocese for the Military Services was created by Pope Saint John Paul II to provide the Catholic Church's full range of pastoral ministries and spiritual services to those in the United States Armed Forces. This includes more than 220 installations in 29 countries, patients in 153 V.A. Medical Centers, and federal employees serving outside the boundaries of the USA in 134 countries. Numerically, the AMS is responsible for more than 1.8 million men, women, and children.

**A DONATION** has been made in memory of *Marie Mroz* by Thomas & Diane Flynn.



**Our Lady's Window**

**May 15**  
*Jillian Betters*  
by Ryan & Brayden McCord

**May 20**  
*Eugene Richotte* 10th anniversary  
by his family

**May 21**  
*In honor of Fr. Stan on his birthday*



Please remember these parishioners in your prayers  
+*Marie Mroz* +*Michael Gove* +*Harry Mathieu*

**DO YOU HAVE A NEW ADDRESS? PHONE NUMBER? DROPPED THE LANDLINE?**  
Please contact the rectory so that we can update our records and continue to stay connected.

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