



SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

FIRST READING: Acts 16:9-15

A reading from Acts.

⁹During the night Paul had a vision:

there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying,
“Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

¹⁰When he had seen the vision,

we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia,
being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

¹¹We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace,
the following day to Neapolis, ¹²and from there to Philippi,
which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony.
We remained in this city for some days.

¹³On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river,
where we supposed there was a place of prayer;

and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there.

¹⁴A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us;
she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth.

The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul.

¹⁵When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying,
“If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord,
come and stay at my home.”

And she prevailed upon us.

The word of the Lord. or Word of God, word of life.

PSALMODY: Psalm 67

SECOND READING: Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5

A reading from Revelation.

¹⁰And in the spirit

“one of the angels” carried me away to a great, high mountain
and showed me the holy city Jerusalem
coming down out of heaven from God.

FIRST READING *Macedonia = mass-uh-DOHN-ee-uh Troas = TROH-us Samothrace = SAM-uh-thrays*
Neapolis = nee-AP-uh-lis Philippi = fil-IP-eye Lydia = LID-ee-uh Thyatira = thy-uh-TY-ruh

This is one of those readings that is difficult mostly because of the pronunciation issues. Work early and hard at these pronunciations until you know them as well as you know the name of the state in which you live. After that, this is really a very simple yet touching story.

SECOND READING

This is a vision of heaven. The author is ecstatic! An excellent reading will convey John’s joy, amazement, hope, and conviction. Take time in preparing the reading to see all of the various details of the picture before trying to share them with the listeners.

²²I saw no temple in the city,
 for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.
²³And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it,
 for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.
²⁴The nations will walk by its light,
 and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.
²⁵Its gates will never be shut by day—
 and there will be no night there.
²⁶People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.
²⁷But nothing unclean will enter it,
 nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood,
 but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

^{22:1}Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life,
 bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb
²through the middle of the street of the city.
 On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit,
 producing its fruit each month;
 and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.
³Nothing accursed will be found there any more.
 But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it,
 and his servants will worship him;
⁴they will see his face,
 and his name will be on their foreheads.
⁵And there will be no more night;
 they need no light of lamp or sun,
 for the Lord God will be their light,
 and they will reign forever and ever.

The word of the Lord. *or* Word of God, word of life.

GOSPEL: John 14:23-29

OR JOHN 5:1-9, following

The holy gospel according to John.

²³Jesus answered [Judas (not Iscariot),
 “Those who love me will keep my word,
 and my Father will love them,
 and we will come to them and make our home with them. ▶

GOSPEL (John 14) *Iscariot = is-CAR-ee-ut*

Here are more gentle, instructive words for the disciples Jesus loved. There is a feeling of warmth in these instructions and promises that bespeaks the deep affection our Lord must have felt for these disciples. Be sensitive as well to the disconnected nature of these thoughts. Slow the delivery sufficiently so that each has an opportunity to reach the heart of the hearer.

²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words;
and the word that you hear is not mine,
but is from the Father who sent me.

²⁵“I have said these things to you while I am still with you.

²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,
whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything,
and remind you of all that I have said to you.

²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

²⁸You heard me say to you,

‘I am going away, and I am coming to you.’

If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father,
because the Father is greater than I.

²⁹And now I have told you this before it occurs,
so that when it does occur, you may believe.”

The gospel of the Lord.

OR: John 5:1-9

The holy gospel according to John.

¹After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

²Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool,
called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes.

³In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.

⁵One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years.

⁶When Jesus saw him lying there

and knew that he had been there a long time,
he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”

⁷The sick man answered him,

“Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up;
and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.”

⁸Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.”

⁹At once the man was made well,

and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now that day was a sabbath.

The gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL (John 5) *Beth-zatha = beth-ZAY-thuh porticoes = POR-tih-koz invalid = IN-vuh-lid*
A sense of understatement may be the best clue as to how this text ought to sound. The scene is set in simple detail. Jesus, (knowing the invalid “had been there a long time”) asks, “Do you want to be made well?” Gentle irony may increase the story’s impact. Do not overlook the power of the final sentence. Jesus is Lord not only of the condition of humanity but of its calendar as well.