

6th Sunday of Easter

25th May 2025 Readings

FIRST READING

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

15:1-2,22-29

In those days: Some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the Apostles and the elders about this question.

Then it seemed good to the Apostles and the elders, with the whole Church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers and sisters, with the following letter: 'The brothers, both the Apostles and the elders, to the brothers and sisters who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions, it has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 66:2-3,5-6,8 Response v.2.

R/. *Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.*

O God, be gracious and bless us
and let your face shed its light upon us.
So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your saving help. **R/.**

Let the nations be glad and exult
for you rule the world with justice.
With fairness you rule the peoples,
you guide the nations on earth. **R/.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God still give us his blessing
till the ends of the earth revere him. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the Apocalypse

21:10-14,22-23

The angel carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed — on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.

And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him.'

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 14:23-29

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

'These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, "I am going away, and I will come to you." If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



6th SUNDAY of EASTER

Lectionary Year C

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

*"Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you,
a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you."*

Tuesday 27th May 2025
Saint Augustine of Canterbury
(- 605?)

The setting of today's Gospel is the night before Jesus' own suffering and death. It is a continuation of the Last Supper discourse from which the Gospel of last Sunday was also taken. The reading is given to us in the Easter season as a reminder that the promises of God to his people have been fulfilled. Jesus has returned to the Father and the Holy Spirit has been sent to guide all people to truth. Jesus' farewell gift and wish for his disciples is a message of peace. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." As Jesus prepared to return to the Father, he was at peace knowing he had accomplished the mission for which he was sent. He teaches us that peace comes from both being faithful and in letting go. Peace is an inner reality. It is about recognizing God's presence in and around us, made possible by the gift of the Holy Spirit. "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." Imagine Jesus wanting to make his dwelling in the likes of us! And yet the words of Jesus offer us hope. When we allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit, we discover peace. When we make good choices, we experience peace. Today, we are invited to experience the gift of peace, which comes to us in both the Word we have heard and in the Eucharist we will receive. It seems appropriate today to pray for peace; peace in our hearts, homes, and in the world.

Prayer of the Week

A Prayer for Inner Peace

God, who is more than we can ever comprehend,
help us to seek you,
and you alone.
Help us to stand before all that we could do
and seek what you would do,
and do that.
Lift from us our need to achieve all that we can
be and instead,
surrender to what you can be in us.
Give us ways to refrain from the busyness
that will put us on edge and off centre,
give us today your peace.

Amen.

Christianity in Britain started early, but was largely submerged by the pagan Anglo-Saxon invasions of the fifth and sixth centuries. It remained alive only in the far west, which remained British because it was too remote and inaccessible for the invaders to attack.

It is said that Pope Gregory the Great saw some fair-haired Anglo-Saxon slaves exposed for sale in a market in Rome. He asked where they were from, and when he was told, replied *non Angli, sed angeli* – "not Angles, but angels," and determined to secure their evangelization.

Whatever the truth of that story, it is certain that Gregory did organise a party of thirty monks to travel to south-eastern England and spread the Gospel there, and chose as their leader Augustine, prior of the monastery of St Andrew in Rome. They landed in 597, and were welcomed by the king of Kent, Ethelbert, who became a Christian along with many of his subjects. A second wave of missionaries arrived in 601. Augustine went to Arles, in France, where he was consecrated archbishop of the English, and then returned to Canterbury to set up his see. The mission prospered, and he founded two more sees, at London and at Rochester in Kent.

The evangelization of the country was planned in close agreement with Pope Gregory, and took care to respect existing traditions. Pagan temples and holy places were not to be destroyed, but to be converted to Christian use; and pagan feasts were to be superseded by Christian ones. This is consistent with the pattern of evangelization throughout the first millennium, which saw Christianity as a fulfilment of what went before, rather than a contradiction of it. Even in Rome itself, temples of Juno had a tendency to become churches dedicated to Our Lady. (It is only with the Spanish colonial evangelizations of the mid-second millennium that the policy of making a clean break with the past began: a policy that works faster but whose effects are not always permanent).

In the far west of Britain, where British bishops had survived the pagan invasions – or where they had fled to escape them – Augustine was less successful in establishing his authority. The traditions of the Celtic church were different from the Roman ones, and bishops who had guided their people for generations were not about to submit to a jumped-up missionary from overseas. It took several generations for the whole of Great Britain to become Christian and for the English and British liturgical traditions to be reconciled.

Augustine died at Canterbury on 26 May 604 or 605.