



# ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS



**St. Rita of Cascia**

*Memorial Day: 22 May*

**MAY 2022** | DAILY READINGS & REFLECTIONS



# ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS

MAY  
2022

“Be afraid neither of the world, nor of the future, nor of your weakness. The Lord has allowed you to live in this moment of history so that, by your faith, his name will continue to resound throughout the world.”

Pope Benedict XVI

**Published by:**

*The Life in the Spirit Communities of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Colombo, Sri Lanka, (With Ecclesiastical Approval).*

**Editors**

Lalith Perera  
Louis Benedict

Read the “Daily Reflections” from anywhere in the world by downloading the PDF file from [www.risenlordcommunity.org](http://www.risenlordcommunity.org)

## Sunday May 1

Third Sunday of Easter

Acts  
5:27-32,40-41

Psalm  
30:2-5,10-12

Revelation  
5:11-14

John  
21:1-19

Allow the Risen Lord to transform you into a New Creation.

In today's Gospel proclamation we see the Lord Jesus encountering the Apostles on the banks of the Lake Tiberius. The apostles exhausted, discouraged, and confused have returned to what is familiar - fishing. How many times do we do the same thing? When conflicts and crises arise we return to old habits and pursuits, trying to find familiarity in unfamiliar territory.

Here we see the Lord Jesus, the good shepherd going looking for the apostles. He does not give up on them. He meets them where they are, accepting them and providing for their immediate need. The Lord Jesus goes further by taking St Peter aside and questioning him three times. He knows St. Peter's broken heart and his questions echo the three times St. Peter denied Christ. It can be hard to forgive but even harder to accept forgiveness. How hard it must have been for St. Peter to stand before the Lord. But the Lord Jesus does not admonish him for his betrayals, he does not focus on his failure, rather he focuses on St. Peter's capacity to love, and gives him his mission - 'be a good shepherd, like me. I know you are weak, but I know you love me. I trust you to be a good shepherd, ready to give his life for his lambs and sheep.' Faced with such complete acceptance and forgiveness St. Peter becomes a new creation: a fisherman turned shepherd.

This is the St. Peter we encounter in our first reading, gone is the man who feared death and denied the Lord Jesus. Here is the rock on which the church was built. St. Peter understands intimately the truth of God's love and his plan of salvation, and fearlessly stands his ground before the powerful leaders of the Council. Having experienced the full measure of forgiveness of the Lord, he now bears witness, indeed rejoices in the fact that he suffers for the sake of the Gospel.

The second reading reveals to us the eternal reality that to the Lamb who was slain, belongs all glory. And the whole universe, the heavens and earth bow down to his majesty.

We may have run away from God in our hearts, maybe we find it difficult to look beyond our present crisis or accept forgiveness for our shortcomings. But this Easter season let us see, the mighty Risen Lord, the one who is infinitely capable of taking care of our every need. Let us see him as he stands on the shores of our lives calling out to us. As he gently ministers to us, let us open ourselves to his love and mercy allowing him to transform us into a new creation.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I be transformed by your love and acceptance. Help me to accept myself and see myself as your precious child. Amen.

## Monday May 2

Memorial of St Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Acts  
6:8-15

Psalm 119:  
23-24,26-27,29-30

John  
6:22-29

Seek eternal life, not short-term gains.

In today's first reading, we see St. Stephen zealously carrying out his work for the glory of God. St. Stephen did great miracles and wonders and he was full of wisdom and grace. In the presence of his persecutors in the Council who were giving false evidence, the face of St. Stephen appeared like that of an angel. How I wish I could have that same grace and zeal of St. Stephen, to stand before all those who may laugh at me for even trying to follow Christ. Those who chastise me as perhaps eccentric, as my life revolves around Christian spirituality: the inner responses, the patience and kindness, which are contradictory to the general norms. In the Gospel proclamation Jesus is telling the people of Capernaum to see and believe in the one whom God has sent and not to look for the short-term material or financial gains. No matter how many years we have been journeying with the Lord, don't we still look for the material gain in the way we pray and hope? Do we follow Christ purely to enter eternal life, forsaking all else?

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to see beyond my daily bread to a greater life in eternity. Amen.

## Tuesday May 3

Feast of Saints Philip and James, Apostles

1 Corinthians  
15:1-8

Psalm  
19:2-5

John  
14:6-14

The Way, the Truth and the Life.

In one short sentence the Lord Jesus reveals Himself to us. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Christ is not one way, 'a' way, He is 'the' way. He is the exact image of the Father. How much do we desire to know the Father? As we behold Jesus Christ, we behold the Father and are able to know him and love Him deeper. He is the Truth and the Life. This truth revealed by the Father comes into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who guides us into all Truth (John 16:13) because He will only speak what He hears from the Father and reveal to us, through the written and spoken word of God. As we partake of Him at Mass and receive His Word into our hearts, we receive life in all its fullness. On the feast day of Saints Phillip and James we are reminded today, that God can take hold of a weak and fragile soul filled with doubts and unbelief and transform them into mighty vessels of God. Today let us take hold of the opportunity to become vessels to hold God's Word, and then we will be able to share His Word with others.

Prayer: Abba Father, I bring myself under your Lordship and I commit my life afresh. Make me a vessel unto you. Amen.

## Wednesday May 4

Third Week of Easter

Acts  
8:1-8

Psalm  
66:1-7

John  
6:35-40

Good news.

What is the best news that you have heard in your life? In today's Gospel proclamation Jesus gives us such news. "Whoever comes to me, I shall not turn away". Wherever we are today, no matter what we have done or what we could not do, if only we remember to go to Him, Jesus will not turn us away. The words Jesus uses when He says that 'no one will be lost from those who go to Him' gives us such an assurance that His desire is us. His focus and attention is on us. This attention that He gives is from the Father. Isn't it amazing to know that God's love is the only thing that can truly satisfy the deepest desire and the greatest hunger of our spirit? In today's first reading we see that in a turbulent time where believers were persecuted, Philip courageously went to preach the Gospel. Those who heard the Word were amazed by the signs and wonders that followed. Every darkness will be moved when we testify to the living presence of Jesus. When we praise the Lord, joy will flow into our hearts and our lives will be transformed.

Prayer: Abba Father, fill us with your joy to always turn to you and thank you.

Amen.

## Thursday May 5

Third Week of Easter

Acts  
8:26-40

Psalm  
66:8-9,16-17,20

John  
6:44-51

Uniting ourselves with Jesus.

The Risen Lord continues to remind us that He is the source of eternal life. When we unite ourselves with Jesus Christ by receiving the Holy Eucharist, He promises us something way beyond the materialistic miracles we hope and pray for. Jesus offers us intimate union with Him that will not only sustain us here on earth but will also nourish our spirits and lead us to heaven where we will be in His presence for all eternity. This indeed is the will of God the Father. He is the Father who runs towards the prodigal son, the shepherd who leaves behind the ninety nine sheep for the one who is lost. It is always God that comes reaching out to us first every time we are lost in our sinfulness. He is constantly at work drawing us towards Jesus, giving us opportunities to respond to His calling, just like He did for the Ethiopian eunuch we find in the first reading today. Let us respond to His calling and receive Jesus into our hearts that through His death and resurrection we may live in union with Him now and in the age to come.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I always hunger to be filled with your presence.

Amen.

## Friday May 6

Third Week of Easter

Acts  
9:1-20

Psalm  
117:1-2

John  
6:52-59

Beyond human rationalization.

In today's first reading we read about Ananias who tried to rationalize with God regarding Paul. Sometimes we too are like that. We reason out and find excuses to avoid God's will and calling on our lives. As believers who are led by the Holy Spirit, we need to surrender our reasonings and excuses to obey God's calling. When we follow the Lord's leading, we will become powerful witnesses to those around us. In the Gospel proclamation we see Jesus preaching about the importance of receiving him in the Eucharist. He preached this because some believers had started to rationalize and wonder how one could eat the body and drink the blood of Jesus. However the Lord's plan was the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Our senses may not perceive it, but in reality whenever we receive the Holy Eucharist we are receiving the true body and blood of Jesus. Let us pray that the Lord will increase our faith to see beyond human rationalizations, because his plan and power is way beyond our understanding and logic.

Prayer: Abba Father, increase my faith to see beyond human rationalizations.  
Amen.

## Saturday May 7

Third Week of Easter

Acts  
9:31-42

Psalm  
116:12-17

John  
6:60-69

Lord to whom shall we go?

It is the Spirit that gives us life, not the flesh. Often what we hear from the world blinds us since it sounds more logical. Generally, it defines us and eventually it limits us, and leaves us hopeless. It blinds us to a state, that we no longer see what God intended for us, and we lose the reality of our identity in him. We often fail to identify that it is his Spirit that gives life to us, which is in-built in us. Whatever suffering we might go through, whatever price we might have to pay, we will stand worthy when his Word bears fruit in us. Till this takes place; in a worldly sense, it will be of no worth. We will be failures and losers. Yet once we recognize his living waters, we can identify that we are conquerors in Christ Jesus. We see St Peter speaking the words of life over Aeneas, a man who lived a failed hopeless life. Once St Peter spoke, his reality changed and the life-giving Spirit restored him, so his sickness did not define him but the identity of the Lord did. Today we are freely given his life-giving Spirit so we may live and not die.

Prayer: Abba Father, we turn to you, in you we are more than conquerors.  
Amen.

## Sunday May 8

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts  
13:14,43-52

Psalm  
100:1-3,5

Revelation  
7:9,14-17

John  
10:27-30

Faith, sacrifice and reward.

We see, in the first reading, that in their initial appearance in the Synagogue at Antioch, the Gospel message of Paul and Barnabas, was welcomed by some of the Jews and the gentile converts whom they encouraged to remain faithful to the grace they had received from God.

Presumably because word had spread about their message, the following Sabbath, a great multitude consisting of almost the whole town, had gathered in the synagogue to hear the Word of God. That was enough to worry the "establishment". Some Jews became jealous and opposed them with accusations of blasphemy.

To neutralize the strong support from the converts, those upper class Jews mobilized support from powerful men and even "devout women" and had Paul and Barnabas driven out of the city, because they felt their privileged position in society was threatened by the Gospel message of equality before God and salvation for all.

The mission, however, was a success because the Word spread through the countryside and Paul and Barnabas, despite shaking the dust off their feet when leaving the area to signify that they had attempted to preach the Word to the Jews and had been rejected, were "filled with joy and the Holy Spirit".

The second reading continues the theme of the spread of the Gospel and tells us about the conversion and salvation of the world. Salvation, however, is accompanied by "great tribulation", whether by persecution or sacrifice. Such faith is rewarded by the cleansing blood of the Lamb, which whitens their robes and banishes hunger, thirst, heat and tears and rewards them with the waters of life in eternity.

In the Gospel Proclamation Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself assures us that He is our shepherd, whose voice we know and whom we follow. He knows us individually, repeating and reinforcing the message of the Psalm, that He gives us eternal life. Jesus assures us that His power comes from God, with whom He is One and that no one can take away His power, or deprive us of his promised protection and everlasting life.

We can take heart from the promises of Jesus to protect us and grant us eternal life if we are faithful to Him and do His work. Just like Paul and Barnabas, we too can be filled with joy and the Holy Spirit by loving God and our neighbour and exemplifying the Gospel message with our words, our actions and our lives, so that others can be brought into the flock.

Prayer: Abba Father, we pray for the grace to live according to the Gospel teaching. Amen.

## Monday May 9

Fourth Week of Easter

Acts  
11:1-18

Psalm  
42:2-3;43:3-4

John 10:1-10 or  
John 10:11-18

### Living the Word of God.

In today's first reading, when Peter brought the news of Cornelius' conversion, the believers were shocked that Peter had eaten with Gentiles, it kind of looks like someone had spent time with a person their family disagrees with. After they heard the whole story, however, they praised God. Their responses teach us how to handle disagreements with other Christians. Before judging the behavior of fellow believers, it is important to hear them out. The Holy Spirit may have something important to teach us through them. God had promised throughout the Scriptures that he would reach all the nations. This began with his general promise to Abraham. Too often we are inclined to accept only the parts of God's Word that appeal to us and support our agendas, ignoring the teachings we do not like. We must accept all of God's Word as absolute truth and be the living word of God. When we practice living the Word of God, our children will follow the example generation after generation.

Prayer: Abba Father, empower us to live and act according to your Word.  
Amen.

## Tuesday May 10

Fourth Week of Easter

Acts  
11:19-26

Psalm  
87:1-7

John  
10:22-30

### Being led by the Holy Spirit.

Today many people are obsessed with worldly prosperity, which in the ordinary sense means having all kinds of material wealth and goods, but real prosperity is the ability to hear the voice of God, to be led by the Holy Spirit, and to be in God's presence every day. The Lord Jesus is emphasizing on the importance of discipleship. Being a disciple is not about having a title, instead we are always expected to listen to God and be in the presence of God. When we hear his voice and follow him, we will be guided by the holy Spirit. When we are led by the Holy Spirit we will be able to live as children of God. Let us think about our day to day activities, am I listening to God's voice daily? Am I led by the Holy Spirit? Am I in the presence of God every day or am I listening to the voice of the world and acting according to the values of the world? Once I start to act based on worldly values, it will lead to destruction. Let us ask for the grace to hear God's voice, to be in his presence and to be led by the Holy Spirit throughout the day.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to hear your voice, so I will be led by your Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Wednesday May 11

Fourth Week of Easter

Acts  
12:24--13:5

Psalm  
67:2-3,5-6,8

John  
12:44-50

### Jesus our Saviour.

In today's first reading we read about the mission of Paul and Barnabas. In obedience to the Holy Spirit the disciples laid hands on them and sent them on mission. We too have been anointed at Baptism and Confirmation to be missionary disciples. We are not called to be comfortable in our church settings but to take up the challenge of sharing the Good News with those who do not yet know Jesus. As people begin to hear and listen to God's Word, they will realise that the Lord who called them is the God of all creation. We have been empowered, no longer do we have to live in fear. As Jesus says in today's Gospel proclamation, "I have come, not to condemn the world, but to save the world." Jesus will not condemn us, let us not listen to the voice of the deceiving world which says that God loves us only if we are perfect. Jesus died for us sinners, therefore there is hope for us. If we continue to hold on with faith, we shall receive the gift of eternal life. This is the message of hope that we receive during this Easter season.

Prayer: Abba Father, empower me to live a grace-filled life.  
Amen.

## Thursday May 12

Fourth Week of Easter

Acts  
13:13-25

Psalm  
89:2-3,21-22,25,27

John  
13:16-20

### Be Jesus to Judas.

God has been faithful to His people over all generations and appointed sinful, broken, weak and talentless people who repented and were surrendered to God upon their calling. Jesus chose twelve disciples and Judas betrayed Him. Jesus knew what Judas was going to do but loved him to the end. Judas was welcomed by Jesus. He ate and drank of the same cup as Jesus, witnessed miracles and listened to the Word and was in close communion and conversed with Him. Yet he gave into sin and betrayed his Master. We have people in our lives who are close to us and whom we trust - friends, relatives, spouse, children, parents, neighbors, community members, parishioners, colleagues – who could betray us for various reasons, but our call is to walk in forgiveness, patience, kindness, compassion and love just like Jesus. We should not destroy their names, or become obsessed with taking revenge. We may have many reasons to be angry but let us forgive as we have been forgiven by the infinite mercy of Jesus.

Prayer: Abba Father, grant me the grace to receive you by serving the people in my life. Amen.

## Friday May 13

Fourth Week of Easter

Acts  
13:26-33

Psalm  
2:6-11

John  
14:1-6

Do not be troubled! Trust in God.

War is aggravating. Struggle for power has taken precedence over peace and love. Humanity against humanity and hostility against hostility. The entire world is in chaos and those who have power want more of it and those who do not, seem trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty. Do we know a way out or have answers to questions before us? Not unless we know the one who came to save: Jesus Christ. He is the way, the truth and the life. Today in the scriptures we are reminded of the message of salvation. What is our individual story in the bigger plan of salvation that God intended for all of humanity? Everyone is entitled to receive the gift of eternal life. We can only receive it through Christ and in Christ. In this season of Easter, let us focus only on the one who can give it. Let us not trouble our hearts with disturbing news or the overwhelming environment before us. Rather we believe in our hearts that the Son of man is coming soon to take all of us to the rooms that belong to us. The ones He has prepared for you and me.

Prayer: Abba Father, I pray that that I am able to do the little to contribute to the greater plan of your salvation to this world. Amen.

## Saturday May 14

Feast of St Matthias, Apostle

Acts  
1:15-17,20-26

Psalm  
113:1-8

John  
15:9-17

Hidden to the world, but seen by the Father in Heaven.

Today we celebrate the feast of St. Matthias, who humbled himself and followed Jesus from His baptism all the way to His death and resurrection. He continued his journey with all the believers even after the Lord's ascension into heaven. He was unseen and unheard of until the disciples began looking for someone to replace Judas as the twelfth disciple. The bible does not say anything about Matthias' character; but we can infer he would have been someone who greatly loved the Lord. He would have been transformed by witnessing the great miracles the Lord Jesus performed. Explaining the parable of the Sower, Jesus says in Matthew 13:23, "The seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." Matthias would have been a follower such as this. He heard the Word and saw the miracles and it penetrated deep within him. He journeyed with the Lord in secret and was rewarded for His faithfulness.

Prayer: Abba Father, I pray for the grace to be able to journey with you throughout my life, unseen to the world, but known by you. Amen.

## Sunday May 15

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts  
14:21-27

Psalm  
145:8-13

Revelation  
21:1-5

John  
13:31-35

Love one another.

On this beautiful Sunday we are given a new commandment to love one another, just as we have been loved by God our Father.

We are invited to love one another not on our terms and in our way of understanding. Rather, we are invited to love people, just as our Lord loved and forgave his loved ones who let him down tremendously.

Often, we love people for the good they offer us and their acceptance of us. The moment they are rude and hurtful we take it as our right to hit back and hurt back. Our Lord did not present us with this model of love but one that forgave His worst enemies.

This love was reflected in the tireless, painful, arduous journeys of the first disciples who travelled from place to place, not in air-conditioned flight cabins but over land and sea, ill equipped and often starving. Their model of life was to fast and pray for the leadership and flock they were ministering to before key decisions were made. Thus, their prayer was powerful, life changing and impacted the newly formed communities. Today, we often lack such leadership examples and so we lack any impact on people's lives.

Our Lord Jesus exhorted us to love one another after bidding farewell to Judas who was on his way to betray the Lord. The Lord was well aware of the soon to occur betrayal and yet in spite of the upcoming betrayal He was preaching a model of selfless love.

One is reminded that though we may have difficulties and let downs the ultimate prize awaits those who will stick on and make an effort to be like our Lord Jesus to the end.

The prize will be that we will behold a new heaven and a new glorious earth that will shine like the stars. Every tear will be wiped away and there shall be no more death or mourning. The Lord will make all things new.

Therefore, we are encouraged to bear our daily crosses with gratitude and acceptance since we have a glorious future that awaits those who put their trust in the Lord. As we carry our crosses and overcome our challenges, we have a compassionate God accompanying us through life and willing to share our burdens and crosses.

We are not alone as we labour for the Lord and our efforts will be gloriously rewarded. Hence, when faced with trials, setbacks and moments of weakness, let us not lose hope and shift our gaze away from Jesus because as much as we love, we will receive love and be loved in eternity.

Prayer: Abba Father, let your love shine into my heart that I may love, accept and welcome others in your name. Amen.

## Monday May 16

Fifth Week of Easter

Acts  
14:5-18

Psalm  
115:1-4,15-16

John  
14:21-26

Love the Lord and obey his Word.

Our focus should be on God; by this focus we can discern and do miraculous healings in the name of Jesus! However, through these miraculous deeds, the preachers or servers cannot be mistaken for God, because it is not people who heal but the Lord himself. To love the Lord, means not merely to utter a statement of love, but to honor and obey him. How can we obey him and love him? By living according to his word and making his teaching the outline of our lives. Love for the Lord empowers us to obey his word. By this empowerment we feel the passionate love of the Father. God makes us his dwelling place. When God himself makes us his dwelling place, he reveals his heart to us; our heart is then entwined with his heart. We will feel the closeness of his heart to ours. When the Father dwells with his Spirit of holiness, we are set free. The Spirit of holiness will inspire us to remember each word the Lord has already taught us. This is the life in the Spirit that we long for, empowered by the love of Jesus!

Prayer: Abba Father, we give you thanks as your Spirit of holiness is illuminating us to remember your presence in us. Amen.

## Tuesday May 17

Fifth Week of Easter

Acts  
14:19-28

Psalm  
145:10-13,21

John  
14:27-31

God's perfect peace.

Imagine going on a holiday, visiting a beautiful location, or relaxing in a calm environment...however remotely possible it may sound during this long-standing pandemic, the idea of it all brings instant joy and peace. In today's Gospel proclamation, 'peace' is the gift our Lord offers His disciples. The same gift of peace is on offer for each and every one of us. As our Lord promises, it is not like the momentary peace the world offers us which is here today and gone tomorrow. It is His own peace that He is giving us this day...this gift of peace does not depend on circumstances, cannot be taken away at the turn of events, lasts through good and bad times alike and is able to flow from one person to the other and lifts them up. When we open our hearts and receive this precious gift, we begin to realize that we are loved and forgiven and the darkness in this world will cease to have power over us. His peace is vastly different from what we perceive and understand. God's peace helps us to rest because we know that he is in control.

Prayer: Abba Father, I believe that your peace is with me, the same peace flows through me and I have nothing to be afraid of. Amen.

## Wednesday May 18

Fifth Week of Easter

Acts  
15:1-6

Psalm  
122:1-5

John  
15:1-8

Appointed to bear fruit.

Today's Gospel proclamation gives an imagery of a Vine and a Vine grower. In this narrative our lives are likened to the Vine, which has to bear fruit in due time and season. The heavenly Father is portrayed in the role of the Vine dresser, who breaks the branches that do not bear fruit or prunes the Vine in order to cultivate a branch that bears more fruit. Hence, we are reminded very prudently, that the only way to bear fruit in our lives is to remain in the Lord and have His Word in our hearts and minds, which will make us disciples. We are reminded that if we do not have the Lord in us, we can do nothing. We will be like the branch that is thrown out and withers. Therefore, today let us ask ourselves, "Do I have the Holy Word sunk into my heart, that I could be a vessel that would carry our Lord and His spirit to the world? Is my life another life-generating, fruit-bearing Vine for the glory of our Lord? Are we open and flexible enough to this call of our Master, to make more disciples in the world, by bearing fruit that will last?"

Prayer: Abba Father, make me a fruitful vine, to bear your word in my thoughts, words and deeds for your glory. Amen.

## Thursday May 19

Fifth Week of Easter

Acts  
15:7-21

Psalm  
96:1-3,10

John  
15:9-11

God's infinite love for his children.

We often liken God's grace to our broken and inconsistent forms of love, when in reality, His grace sees all of humanity as worthy of being saved and makes "no distinction between us and them". When we humanise His perfect grace, we turn a gift so freely given into something we unnecessarily try to strive for. His grace is most surely undeserved, so why would we pretend that there is anything we could do to either earn it or lose it? Why do we try to box it within human explanations? It is unfathomable, infinite, and ever present. As Peter asks the elders and apostles, why do we senselessly place a yoke of religious burden and limit God's grace. God calls us as we are to experience His heart and then share it with all who do not know that they are already worthy and chosen in the eyes of the Father. Jesus affirms the depth of His love for us so that we may find joy in knowing how loved we are. By accepting how greatly we are loved, we can love more widely. Let God teach us the vastness of His grace and His love for us, His children.

Prayer: Abba Father, let your grace meet every part of me. May your love wash me clean. Amen.

## Friday May 20

Fifth Week of Easter

Acts  
15:22-31

Psalm  
57:8-10,12

John  
15:12-17

How great is your love, O Lord!

Jesus is telling "Love one another as I have loved you." Jesus has loved me in my sinfulness and in my brokenness. Even when we reject him, he loves us. His love is a self-giving love. He does not wait till we change to love us. Today Jesus' words are a challenge to me. Can I love the person who has hurt me? Can I accept the people who do not agree with my ideas and my way of doing things? When a person is a threat to my position or someone is dominating, can I not reject that person. The one who I feel has harmed my good name, can I work together with that person? Is it hard or impossible? Have we stopped doing good works because of a person? Let us examine ourselves and give the truth to Jesus. The first reading shows, how the early Church depended on the Holy Spirit for their decisions. Empowered by the Spirit they accepted the Gentiles, whom they never accepted before. Let us invite the Holy Spirit into our lives, let him burn our sinful nature. Then we will be filled with the power to accept people as they are.

Prayer: Abba Father, give us the power to love and accept the people that you have placed in our lives. Amen.

## Saturday May 21

Fifth Week of Easter

Acts  
16:1-10

Psalm  
100:1-3,5

John  
15:18-21

Choose the narrow path.

At every stage of growing up we encounter choices, crossroads and decisions. Those choices are based on choosing the popular, wide road or the unpopular, narrow road. In this generation of "instant" food and messages the wide and popular path is what is often chosen. This wide path is what those who are "of the world" often choose to do. In order to "fit in", "do what makes you feel good" to conform to such standards of the world, we compromise Jesus' standards. So Jesus says when we choose to align our lives according to his word, when we choose to make the hard choices that make us unpopular with the majority - then the world will hate us just like it hated him! Because we become a reflection to them, like a mirror, how truly unbecoming it is to be "worldly". Not everyone likes to be convicted, not everyone is comfortable when their "worldliness" is highlighted. But there is still hope that there is sensitivity in that area and humanity is not totally desensitized to the fact that choices have consequences.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I choose the narrow path and become a true disciple. Amen.

## Sunday May 22

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts  
15:1-2,22-29

Psalms  
67:2-3,5-6,8

Revelation  
21:10-14,22-23

John  
14:23-29

Continue to seek God.

As we read the First reading today, we are reminded of the importance of listening and following the right people and the right message. Our Lord, Jesus Christ Himself appointed the apostles that He wanted and the Holy Spirit replaced Judas with Matthias as the 12th apostle. He showed us the way we must follow. There are plenty of people interpreting the Gospel today and a popular method is the prosperity gospel which many people get carried away with. But the Church has always taught us which way we should follow, the hierarchy and the message is clear. And it is the Holy Spirit then and now that leads us to the truth. As per the situation in the first reading today, we too may be placed in situations where we are startled and at loss for answers to certain situations. But the Word of God has answers to all of these situations and it is the Holy Spirit that can lead us to what God wants for us in these situations.

This is affirmed in the second reading where in the book of Revelation, we are taken back to when the twelve tribes of Israel was instituted and later in the New Testament, the twelve apostles were elected by Jesus through whom we have received our faith through the apostolic succession. If we are in doubt as to how we must act when facing war, illness, other trials life is throwing at us, the tools are already provided by the Church.

The Gospel too affirms the relationship we need to have with the living Christ, we must be in Him for Him to talk to us and through us. When He starts living IN us and with us, life becomes easily livable. We were never called to live it alone anyway. He yet again reminds us His promise of the Holy Spirit, who advocates and guides us to the truth. When we realise this, the peace we receive is not of this world, it comes directly from Him which cannot be destroyed by worldly agonies and tribulations. It gives us the security and the freedom we should live with. It is not the time to be troubled, but to seek Him with all our heart. We do not have to face life alone. He never left us and never will. We just have to open up ourselves so we could see Him. He is always here with us!

Pope Francis said, St. Augustine lived a life like many of the young people today. "He knew intense love, but in his heart, there remained the restlessness of the search for the profound meaning of life, his heart was not asleep, it was not anesthetized by success, by things, by power. He discovered that God was waiting for him and, in fact, never stopped looking for him first." Christians must "look into your hearts and ask yourself if you have a heart that wants great things or a heart that is asleep. Has your heart maintained that restlessness or has it been suffocated by things?"

Prayer: Abba Father, lead us by your Spirit to live for your glory.

Amen.

## Monday May 23

Sixth Week of Easter

Acts  
16:11-15

Psalm  
149:1-6,9

John  
15:26--16:4

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Today's scripture opens and closes with a command, "Praise the Lord." It is not a idea. It is not just good advice. We are commanded, as the people of God, to praise Him. The psalmist gives us two reasons why we must obey this command: First, we have a duty to praise the Lord since Jesus has saved us from sin. Second, we have been given the two-edged sword of the Word of God to put down liars and false teachers until all the rivals of Christ are made his footstool. We have an inclination to forget God until we are in distress. We do not come before Him to praise Him, even to be thankful for seemingly ordinary things. How often do we wake up in the morning and thank God that we woke up? That we are still breathing. We have so much to be thankful for, that if we took the time to give thanks for each thing we have been given, we would do nothing but give thanks and praise to Him. We should learn and spread God's Word so that people will know that Jesus is the Truth. When He is known for Who He is, praise is directed to Him.

Prayer: Abba Father, may you be praised, not only in my words, but also in my actions, not only in what I sing, but also in how I treat my neighbor. Amen.

## Tuesday May 24

Sixth Week of Easter

Acts  
16:22-34

Psalm  
138:1-3,7-8

John  
16:5-11

The Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth.

What is the truth about life and this world? In my own life, I believed in many different things, I had opinions about almost everything, from time to time I took sides on things that divided the world, about life itself, I was convinced I am right about everything. The issue with this is that everyone has their opinions and views, and we think we are right and all who disagree with us are wrong. This simply cannot be the case. There has to be an ultimate truth beyond what divides us. And that ultimate truth is what today's reading is all about. Jesus says, "unless I go away, the Holy Spirit will not come to you. When he comes he will prove the world to be wrong." As St Augustine says, "our hearts are restless untill we rest in you." The Holy Spirit can come to our hearts at any moment if we ask him. When he comes, he will transform our hearts and teach the truth. As Jesus says, "The truth will set you free." Things around us may remain the same but our hearts will be changed, and we will be at peace as we will know the ultimate truth.

Prayer: Abba Father, send the Holy Spirit into our hearts today. We need you more than ever. Amen.

## Wednesday May 25

Sixth Week of Easter

Acts  
17:15,22--18:1

Psalm  
148:1-2,11-14

John  
16:12-15

The Holy Spirit - The greatest gift.

The Spirit of the Lord reveals the heart of Jesus to us. Are we aware of that? Do we experience his presence in our lives? Have we invited him to take over our lives? Are we trying to build a relationship with Him? The answer is quite often we ignore it knowingly or unknowingly. As Christians, we need to know and experience the Holy Spirit because He is the greatest gift. If we are close to him, he would make us holy and strengthen us through his fruits and his gifts. If we have the Holy Spirit then we have peace, and we will not fear because he is with us. How will we build that relationship with him? We need to enter into personal prayer and read the scriptures. As we practice this, we start to hear his voice and experience him. Once in a while we might fall back and we might attempt to walk away, but we can rise up and walk again with him. He is waiting to change our life and make us bold and happy. Therefore, as believers, let us be more open to the Holy Spirit and ask him to transform us according to God's will.

Prayer: Abba Father, burn our life with your holy fire and fill us with your gifts to bring the Good news to your people. Amen.

## Thursday May 26

Memorial of St Philip Neri, Priest

Acts  
18:1-8

Psalm  
98:1-4

John  
16:16-20

Your sorrow will be turned to joy.

The Gospel of John resonates with this theme of sorrow being turned to joy; Jesus had to leave the disciples to send the Holy Spirit. Grief would be turned to joy when the Holy Spirit comes. This joy goes deeper than the fleeting emotions we know because it is eternal, and its origin is the Holy Spirit. It is the work of God within our lives when we die to self in total surrender. We have a vivid light on the kind of life Saint Paul lived. We see his zeal for God and how he received his courage and strength from God. He faced many hardships fearlessly in total surrender, certain of the joy to follow. Saint John Paul II said, "We do not pretend life is all beauty. We are aware of darkness and sin, of poverty and pain. But we know Jesus has conquered sin and passed through his own pain to the glory of the resurrection. We live in the light of his Paschal Mystery - the mystery of his death and resurrection. We are an Easter People 'Alleluia' is our song." As Saint Philip Neri preached, let us strive for a renewal of the faith in our hearts.

Prayer: Abba Father, may the joy of the Holy Spirit always live in us. Amen.

## Friday May 27

Sixth Week of Easter

Acts  
18:9-18

Psalm  
47:2-7

John  
16:20-23

Is my life glorifying God?

We have the freedom to choose what we should do and become. As adults we know what we need in life and our decisions should be conscious choices. St Paul made such a conscious decision after his encounter with the Risen Lord. Every time when St. Paul was on crossroads, our Lord Jesus spoke to him to give the correct leading. We see such an occurrence in the first reading, the word which was spoken to St. Paul through a vision at night was confirmed by the incident that took place. He was asked to continue the mission in that place and the way was paved to do so. When we make correct decisions in life, our lives too will be guided without any confusion. Often we are confused because we take decisions based on selfish or ulterior motives. We might step out to serve the Lord but, on the way, get attracted to human glory. Looking at St. Paul we see that our lives can be guided in the correct path when we do things with right motives. Have we taken our mission from the hands of God to bring glory to Him?

Prayer: Abba Father, may I live my life to praise and glorify your name through every challenge and difficulty. Amen.

## Saturday May 28

Sixth Week of Easter

Acts  
18:23-28

Psalm  
47:2-3,8-10

John  
16:23-28

Heavenly Father loves me no matter what.

God who is so holy dwells in unapproachable light, whom no human being has seen or can see (1Tim 6:16). Yet, He loved us so much, He sent His Son, who took a human body to manifest the Father's love by dying for our sins and giving us the ability to approach the Father and allow His love to fill our hearts. The deep hunger and cry of every heart: "Our hearts were made for you and it won't rest till it finds rest in you." (St. Augustine). My relationship with my earthly father was full of beautiful memories. He gave me what my heart cried out for in a difficult world. From childhood to adulthood I knew what pleased him and what did not. As a result my behavior was based on doing things that would not displease him. I sought doing things that would make him proud of having such a son. Of course there were many times I could not help falling short living up to his expectations. He would still love me, the very thing my heart sought. That made me secure. Our Heavenly Father also wants such a relationship with us.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I experience the joy of knowing I am loved, because of your Son Jesus who loves me. Amen.

## Sunday May 29

### Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord

Acts  
1:1-11

Psalms  
47:2-3,6-9

Hebrews  
9:24-28;10:19-23

Luke  
24:46-53

#### Open heavens.

An entirely supernatural event - Jesus' ascension. A mind blowing experience for the apostles who witnessed and for all of us who read and imagine! Yet, the whole process was predicted by the Lord Jesus several times during His ministry (John 14:1-2; 16:7), and reiterated after His Resurrection. The Lord spent forty days, making the disciples understand that His Kingdom was spiritual and not political. What they could not understand then, they experienced finally.

As I reflect on both the Gospel proclamation and the First Reading, what stood out for me was that the Lord Jesus instructed His apostles to wait for power from on high - the Holy Spirit, the promised gift of the Father, to fill them and transform them inside out. Yet, their focus was mostly on the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, freedom from Roman rule. It was only after they had witnessed Him ascending to heaven that "they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy". From then on "they stayed continually in the temple, praising God." (John 24:52,53). This had been the experience of most of us too, when a supernatural moment moved our faith to make the 18 inch journey from our head to our heart, from intellectual knowledge to a relational experience. Isn't it interesting that the Lord willed that only those who were following Him everywhere, having left everything behind, were to witness His glorious ascension?

Note that the apostles went back to Jerusalem, the place their hopes were shattered as their Master was captured, tortured and killed in the most brutal way. It was the same place that they locked themselves in fear. What changed them? When Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed His apostles as He was about to be taken up to heaven, they finally realised that their King was from heaven and not of this world, and it made their hearts overflow with worship, resulting in an unexplainable joy. This joy made them return to the place they feared. Each time we encounter the Lord in worship, we too experience this change in reality, and our hearts are filled with a heavenly joy. Our sickness, our struggle loses its sting and we receive the heavenly perspective to our life situations.

The heavens that were opened at the baptism of Jesus are still open, and the connecting channel got wider as our Saviour ascended in body and spirit and continues to reign as the Eternal King. Therefore we can draw near to Him with sincere hearts and the full assurance that our faith brings, (Hebrews 10:22), having been cleansed by His Precious Blood, for the curtain that separated the holy of holies from us has been removed forever by the Lamb.

Prayer: Abba Father, raise me up, to walk on stormy seas; I am strong when I am on Your shoulders. Amen.

## Monday May 30

Seventh Week of Easter

Acts  
19:1-8

Psalm  
68:2-7

John  
16:29-33

Importance of evangelization.

The first reading explains the power of evangelization. St. Paul met some believers who did not know the Holy Spirit. Therefore, St. Paul baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus and laid his hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit. Our contextual understanding of this is the two Sacraments: Baptism and Confirmation. When the Holy Spirit comes, our inner awakening happens and we would never remain the same. We are meant to be bold witnesses. In the Gospel proclamation the Lord Jesus gave us the ultimate gift we need for this journey of life: Peace. We often lose peace and we are troubled. The Lord Jesus said that we will have trouble in the world but in Him we have peace. These are two different states of life and the choice is ours. We could live a troubled life in the world or live peacefully in Jesus. When our inner spirit awakens we will not scatter because the Holy Spirit strengthens us. In the middle of the storm we will have peace. Evangelization is the key for people to experience God and His peace.

Prayer: Abba Father, make me a channel of your peace.

Amen.

## Tuesday May 31

Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Zephaniah  
3:14-18

Isaiah  
12:2-6

Luke  
1:39-56

Sacrificial love.

Today can be called a celebration of charity. The Blessed Mother is a model of charity and love. The moment she heard the news about Elizabeth she ran into the hill country, not thinking about her own health and well-being. She had sacrificial love for her cousin. In our lives, how much love do we have for others? Often we tend to prioritise our needs and wants over other people. Today we receive the invitation to think differently. The Gospels inspire us to be more Christ-like. As we imitate Christ we will become more other-centered. Many of our mothers are a role model in this. Mothers would prioritise the needs of their children before attending to their needs. No matter what our state in life is, we will also have opportunities to be sacrificial. Let us be inspired by the life examples of our mothers and fathers together will the exemplary witness of Mother Mary, and become true Christians to those around us. Then we will be worthy children of our Blessed Mother and real brothers and sisters to those around us.

Prayer: Abba Father, may we imitate the Blessed Mother and be sacrificial in our love for others. Amen.

# On Our Knees - SUBSCRIPTION FORM

(To be filled in BLOCK-CAPITAL letters)

Name : .....

Address : .....

City : .....

Postal / ZIP Code : .....

Country : .....

Telephone : .....

**Annual Subscription (12 issues):** Sri Lanka - Rs.840/-

**Payment:** Direct Deposit to Bank or Cheque

## Method of Payment:

1. Directly deposit the one-year (12 issues) fees on the following Bank Account:

**Bank** : Commercial Bank

**Branch** : Wellawatta

**Account Name** : The Community of the Risen Lord

**Account No.** : 1100087435

**Swift Code** : CCEYLK LX

**NB:** Please ensure that you post us your **Bank Deposit Slip** together with the **Subscription Form** duly filled as proof of payment to the address below.

2. Draw a cheque in favour of “**The Community of the Risen Lord**” for the subscription fee of Rs.840/- and post the cheque along with the duly filled **Subscription Form** to the address below:

**THE COMMUNITY OF THE RISEN LORD**  
**NO. 36/1, PAPILIYANA ROAD, NADIMALA, DEHIWALA**

## Feedback

Dear brothers and sisters, we are always looking for ways to improve the **On Our Knees** magazine. Please take a minute and send us your comments by filling the feedback form below:

					
	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excelent
REFLECTIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>				
DESIGN	<input type="checkbox"/>				
OVERALL	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Send us your feedback through Whatsapp on **076 754 4456**, or email us at [risenlordcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:risenlordcommunity@gmail.com) or send us a message via [Facebook Messenger](#) on our facebook page “**On Our Knees**”.

## St. Rita of Cascia

Rita of Cascia (St. Rita), born in 1381 as Margherita Lotti, was an Italian widow and Augustinian nun venerated as a saint. She was affectionately called Rita, the short form of her baptismal name.

She was married at age twelve to a nobleman named Paolo Mancini. Her parents arranged her marriage, a common practice at the time, despite her repeated requests to be allowed to enter a convent of religious sisters. The marriage lasted for eighteen years, during which she is remembered for her Christian values as a model wife and mother who made efforts to convert her husband from his abusive behavior. Rita endured his insults, physical abuse, and infidelities for many years. Through humility, kindness, and patience, Rita was able to convert her husband into a better person, more specifically renouncing a family feud. Paolo was violently stabbed to death by a member of the feuding family. Rita gave a public pardon at Paolo's funeral to her husband's murderers.

Paolo's brother, Bernardo, convinced Rita's sons to seek revenge. He had them leave their home and live at the Mancini villa ancestral home. As her sons grew, their characters began to change. Fearing that her sons would lose their souls, she asked God to remove them from the cycle of vendettas and prevent mortal sin and murder. Her sons died of dysentery a year later, which many people believe was God's answer to her prayer, taking them by natural death rather than risking them to commit a mortal sin. After the deaths of her husband and sons, Rita entered the monastery of Saint Mary Magdalene in Cascia.

When Rita was approximately sixty years of age, she was meditating before an image of Christ crucified. Suddenly, a small wound appeared on her forehead, as though a thorn from the crown that encircled Christ's head had loosened itself and penetrated her own flesh. It was considered to be a partial Stigmata, and she bore this external sign of union with Christ until her death on 22 May 1457. When her body was later exhumed, it was noted that her forehead wound still remained the same, with the glistening light reflected from the drops of blood. Rita's body, which has remained incorrupt over the centuries, is venerated today in the shrine at Cascia, which bears her name.

She was canonized on 24 May, 1900 by Pope Leo XIII. Her Memorial day is 22 May.

**On Our Knees - In His Hands** is a book of reflections and aid to prayer, based on the daily readings of the mass. Its purpose is to help Catholics and other Christians engaged in the normal hustle and bustle of life to discover God's presence and direction in the practical situations they are placed in. This is made possible by a group of writers who themselves are lay people living at the heart of busy day-to-day life.

