

# Scripture Study

Seventh Sunday of Easter– Cycle A



## Opening prayer

Acts 1:12-14

(Ps 27:1,4,7-8)

1 Peter 4:13-16

John 17:1-11a

## Overview of the Gospel:

- The Gospel of John, chapters 13-17, is known as Jesus' "farewell discourse" delivered at the Last Supper on the night he was betrayed. Chapter 17 of this discourse is, in turn, called Jesus' "high priestly prayer." It is addressed aloud to God the Father but in the hearing of Jesus' 12 apostles who are present with him at table.
- The prayer has three parts: Jesus offers up his approaching sacrifice to the Father (John 17:1-5) which is why the prayer is a priestly one (see Hebrews 3:1; 4:14—5:10); he pleads for the preservation of his disciples (John 17:6-19); and prays for the unity of the universal Church (John 17:20-26). It is the longest extended prayer recorded in the Gospels.
- "By entering into the holy name of the Lord Jesus we can accept, from within, the prayer he teaches us: "Our Father!" His priestly prayer fulfills, from within, the great petitions of the Lord's Prayer: concern for the Father's name (John 17:6,11,12,26); passionate zeal for his kingdom (glory)(John 17:1,5,10,22,23-26); the accomplishment of the will of the Father, of his plan of salvation (John 17:2,4,6,9,11,12,24); and deliverance from evil." (John 17:15)

## Questions:

- In the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, what one last instruction does Jesus give the Apostles before he ascends into heaven (verse 4)? How, exactly, do they carry this out (verse 14)?
- In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, how does St. Peter differentiate between suffering that results from doing good and doing evil? What should we conclude from this?
- In the Gospel, what event does Jesus refer to as his "hour" (John 2:4, 17:1,12; 23-24)?
- What does it mean to "glorify" someone (verses 4-5, 10, 22, 24)? How is Jesus' deity emphasized here?
- Who is the focal point of Jesus' prayer in verses 6-11? Why?
- What echoes from the "Our Father" can we find in this passage? Why does Christ pray for himself first?
- This week, whom have you glorified by the way you lived? How so?
- Could you make these words your own prayer? What changes might you make?
- What two phrases sum up your personal goals for the past year? How does this relate to God's purposes?

**Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 217, 2746—2751, 2812**

## Closing Prayer

**Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings found in the bulletin!**

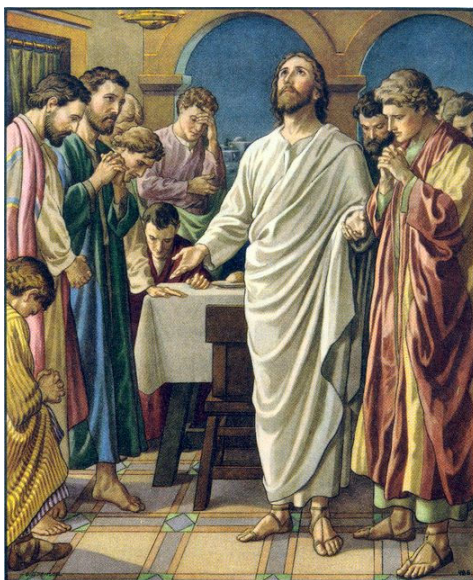
*In all He did from the Incarnation to the Cross, the end Jesus Christ had in mind was the gift of the Eucharist—his personal and corporal union with each Christian through Communion. He saw in it the means of communicating to us all the treasures of His Passion, all the virtues of His Sacred Humanity, and all the merits of His Life.* -St. Peter Julian Eymard

# "This is eternal life, that they know the Father the only true God"

**Scripture:** *John 17:1-11*

**Meditation:** In his Last Supper discourse Jesus speaks of his glory and the glory of his Father. What is this glory? It is the cross which Jesus speaks of here. How does the cross reveal his glory? In the cross God reveals the breadth of his great love for sinners and the power of redemption which cancels the debt of sin and reverses the curse of our condemnation. Jesus gave his Father the supreme honor and glory through his obedience and willingness to go to the cross. In times of defense the greatest honor belongs not to those who fought and survived but to those who gave the supreme sacrifice of their own lives for their fellow citizens.

Jesus speaks of the Father bringing glory to the Son through the great mystery of the Incarnation and Cross of Christ. God the Father gave us his only begotten Son for our redemption and deliverance from slavery to sin and death. There is no greater proof of God's love for each and every person on the face of the earth than the Cross of Jesus Christ. In the cross we see a new way of love – a love that is unconditional, sacrificial and generous beyond comprehension.



Jesus also speaks of eternal life. What is eternal life? It is more than simply endless time. Science and medicine today looks for ways to extend the duration of life; but that doesn't necessarily make life better for us here. Eternal life is qualitative more than quantitative. To have eternal life is to have the life of God within us. When we possess eternal life we experience here and now something of God's majesty, his peace, joy and love and the holiness which characterizes the life of God. Jesus also speaks of the knowledge of God. Jesus tells his disciples that they can know the only true God. Knowledge of God is not simply limited to knowing something about God, but we can know God personally. The essence of Christianity, and what makes it distinct from Judaism and other religions, is the knowledge of

God as our Father. Jesus makes it possible for each of us to personally know God as our Father. To see Jesus is to see what God is like. In Jesus we see the perfect love of God – a God who cares intensely and who yearns over men and women, loving them to the point of laying down his life for them upon the Cross. Jesus is the revelation of God – a God who loves us completely, unconditionally and perfectly. Do you seek unity of heart, mind and will with God and unity of love and peace with your neighbor?

*"If only I possessed the grace, good Jesus, to be utterly at one with you! Amidst all the variety of worldly things around me, Lord, the only thing I crave is unity with you. You are all my soul needs. Unite, dear friend of my heart, this unique little soul of mine to your perfect goodness. You are all mine; when shall I be yours? Lord Jesus, my beloved, be the magnet of my heart; clasp, press, unite me for ever to your sacred heart. You have made me for yourself; make me one with you. Absorb this tiny drop of life into the ocean of goodness whence it came."*  
(Prayer of Francis de Sales, 1567-1622)

**Meditation:** © 2011 Don Schwager  
[www.rc.net/wcc/reading](http://www.rc.net/wcc/reading)