

## The Sixth Sunday of Easter Year A - 29th May 2011

**The First Reading - Acts 10:44-48**

**The Psalm - Psalm 98**

**The Second Reading - 1 John 5:1-6**

**The Gospel Reading - John 15:9-17**

### Prayers

#### Collect One

O Lord,  
from whom all good things do come;  
Grant to us thy humble servants,  
that by thy holy inspiration  
we may think those things that be good,  
and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same;  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Collect Two

God our redeemer,  
you have delivered us from the power of darkness  
and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:  
Grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,  
so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### Post Communion Prayer

God our Father,  
whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life:  
May we also thirst for you,  
the spring of life and source of goodness,  
through him who is alive and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by His death he has recalled us to life, so by His continual presence in us He may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen *Common Worship*

Risen Christ, by the lakeside you renewed your call to your disciples: help your Church to obey your command and draw the nations to the fire of your love, to the glory of God the Father. *Common Worship Shorter Collect*

God of mercy, as we rejoice in the resurrection of your Son, the Bread of Life, feed us with your plenty and increase in us compassion for the hungry; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Methodist Worship*

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and give more than either we desire or deserve. Pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask save through the merits and mediation of Jesus

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Christ your Son our Lord; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Methodist Worship*

Heavenly Father, we bring to you in prayer people who are suffering in mind or spirit. We remember especially those facing long and incurable illness; those cast down by the cares and sorrows of daily life; those who have lost faith and for whom the future is dark. In your mercy maintain their courage, lift their burdens and renew their faith, that they may find in you their strength, their comfort and their peace, for our Saviour's sake.  
*Frank Colquhoun, Twentieth Century.*

Glory to you, O Champion of all Loves, who for our sake endured the cross, encountered the enemy and tasted death. Glory be to you, O King of all Kings, who for our salvation wrestled with principalities and powers, subdued the forces of hell and won the greatest of all victories. To you be all praise, all glory and all love; now and for ever. Amen. *Thomas Ken, 1637-1711*

Lord Jesus we praise you that you promise to be with us to comfort us and to strengthen us in your service. Now we pray that your Holy Spirit would so direct and govern our lives that we might at all time show forth our love for you in acts of obedience and faithfulness. Amen.

Eternal God, give us insight to discern your will for us, to give up what harms us, and to seek the perfection we are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

### Prayers of the people

*Presider or deacon*

God has grafted us to the vine of the house of Israel. Let us offer prayers to God who gives life and breath to all human beings.

*Deacon or other leader*

For this holy gathering and for those who enter our circle of faith.

**Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

For the newly baptized illumined by the light of Christ.

**Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

For all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God.

**Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

For the leaders of the nations and for all who seek peace.

**Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

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For the suffering peoples of the world.

**Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

For those who experience desolation and for those who feel remote from God.

**Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

For the sick, the dying, and the dead.

**Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

For ourselves, our families, and those we love.

**Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

Lifting our voices with all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ. **To you, O Lord.**

*Presider*

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, who gives us confidence and hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In your tender love, hear our prayers for all the world and grant us the power of your abundant and life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Meditation**

Because

Because he emptied himself of all but love, you can be filled.

Because his body was broken, your life can be whole.

Because his blood was shed, your sins can be forgiven.

Because he submitted to injustice, you can forgive,

Because he finished his Father's work, your life has worth.

Because he was forsaken, you can never be alone.

Because he was buried, you can be raised.

Because he lives, you don't have to be afraid,

Because he reached down to you, you don't have to work your way up to him.

Because his promises are always true. You can have hope. Anna Reid.

Father, forgive.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class, Father, forgive.

The covetous desires of men and nations to possess what is not their own, Father, forgive.

The greed which exploits the labours of men, and lays waste the earth, Father, forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others, Father, forgive,

Our indifference to the plight of the homeless and the refugee, Father, forgive.

The lust which uses for ignoble ends the bodies of men and women, Father, forgive.

The pride which leads to trust in ourselves, and not in God, Father, forgive.

### **Sermon quotes - Acts 10:44-48**

1. Holy Spirit - Regarding the power of the Holy Spirit, William Wordsworth, the poet, testified to feeling a presence that disturbed him with "the joy of elevated thoughts." John

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Wesley spoke of his heart being "strangely warmed." William James, the psychologist and philosopher, described the presence of God and "all at once being raised above myself." A man who as a youth never attended church tells of a God who challenged him. "If you're really there," the youth prayed, "I want to know about it." He reports, "Suddenly, I was overwhelmed by a loving presence."

2. This is what William Barclay says about the reading from Acts.

"There were in fact many altars to unknown gods in Athens. Six hundred years before this a terrible pestilence had fallen on the city. Nothing could halt it. A Cretan poet, Epimenides, had come forward with a plan. A flock of black and white sheep were let loose throughout the city from the Areopagus. Wherever each lay down it was sacrificed to the nearest god; and if a sheep lay down near the shrine of no known god it was sacrificed to "The Unknown God." Athens had its regiment of unknown gods. From that Paul takes his starting point. Paul could fit his message for any audience. There are a series of steps in his sermon. (i) God is not the made but the maker, therefore He who made all things cannot be worshipped by anything made by the hands of man. It is all too true that men often worship what their hands have made. If a man's God be that to which he gives all his time, thought, energy, life, many a man is engaged in worshipping material, man-made things. (ii) God has guided history. It was He who had been behind the rise and fall of nations in the days gone by. His hand was and is on the helm of things. (iii) God has made man so that instinctively he longs for God. There is that in man which makes him grope in the darkness after God because man is a child of God and kin to God. (iv) The days of groping and ignorance are past. So long as men had to search in the shadows they could not know God and God excused their follies and their mistakes; but now in Christ the full blaze of the knowledge and revelation of God have come. The days of excuses are past because now the truth has come. (v) The day of judgement is coming. For man life is neither a progress to extinction, as it was to the Epicureans, nor yet a pathway to absorption to God, as it was to the Stoics; it was a journey to the judgement seat of God where Jesus Christ was Judge. (vi) The proof of the pre-eminence of Christ is the Resurrection. It is no unknown God but a Risen Christ with whom we have to deal."

### Online Sermon sources

**Feast of Friendship** - Interesting introduction based on memories of school lunches!

"Something strange happened one day, Peter and the Jewish Christians with him witnessed God's Spirit being poured out on...Gentiles! Our text from Acts said they were "astounded." They were dumbfounded is more like it. They had no idea that God's love would extend so far as to include Gentiles, people with lousy lunches".

[http://www.lectionary.org/Sermons/London/Acts/Acts\\_10\\_Friendship.htm](http://www.lectionary.org/Sermons/London/Acts/Acts_10_Friendship.htm)

**Sermons that work.** The Episcopal Church sermons site. "For whom is the gift of the Holy Spirit intended: some or all? And to whom are we, if fortunate enough to have received the gift of God's Spirit, going to give it: some or all? In the book of the Acts of the Apostles, we hear preaching that explodes the myth of "us and them" and "we and they." We are they."

[http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sermons\\_that\\_work\\_107183\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sermons_that_work_107183_ENG_HTM.htm)

**Paraclete** - short homily of seven paragraphs which deals with the origin of the term, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the lives of individuals and the church. "The most important consequence of this presence of Jesus in our lives is the profound conviction, given to us by the Spirit, that we are embraced by the heavenly Father's love, just as Jesus was embraced by that love. This is what St. Paul tells us when he writes, "God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal 4:6). If we listen to this Spirit,

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we will become ever more confident, in spite of the adversities that we may find in our lives. That is to say, gifted with the Spirit, we can make a difference in the world.”  
<http://www.pjpiisoe.org/homilies/A-6thSunEaster.doc>