

MAY 21, 2023  
SEVENTH SUNDAY  
OF EASTER



*Followers of Jesus pray.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 17:1-11	Jesus prays for his disciples
Monday	Acts 1:6-14	Ascension of Jesus
Tuesday	1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11	Tending the flock of God
Wednesday	1 Thessalonians 5:12-22	Final instructions
Thursday	James 5:13-18	The prayer of faith
Friday	Ephesians 6:18-20	Pray at all times
Saturday	Psalms 68:1-10, 32-35	Praise and thanksgiving
Sunday	John 20:19-23	Jesus appears to his disciples

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*All these [the remaining 11 disciples] were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers. Acts 1:14 (NRSV)*

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, give us a heart to have a relationship with you through prayer that our lives may be filled with hope and confidence through Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### Mealttime Prayer:

God of abundance, we thank you for this food, a gift of your constant love and care for us through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

#### A Blessing to Give:

May the God of all grace strengthen you now and always through Christ our Lord. (1 Peter 5:10)



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### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*What a Friend We  
Have in Jesus*



### WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When do you pray and what do you pray for?
- How does prayer guide you as a follower of Jesus Christ?

### DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Acts 1:6-14.

After Jesus' ascension, the remaining 11 disciples and others "were constantly devoting themselves to prayer" (v. 14). The church begins its ministry with prayer. Waiting in prayer for guidance is the model for the church. Prayer is a way to face suffering as a follower of Christ with hope and even joy (1 Peter 4:13). Jesus prays for his followers that they may receive eternal life by knowing God and Jesus Christ, the one sent by God (John 17:3). The prayers of the church give Jesus' disciples the eyes to see with faith what the world cannot see. In the midst of conflict, prayer communicates praise to God for God's victory over God's enemies (Psalm 68). The first Christians were not self-proclaimed masters of prayer, but through prayer they learned to pray and witness to God's presence in the world.

*Discuss:* How have you learned through prayer to witness to God's presence in the world?

*Pray:* **Ever-present God, give us patience to wait in prayer for your guidance so that we may see our way in life with faith in you through Christ Jesus, your Son and our Lord. Amen.**

### SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve others who are hurting and can benefit from your prayers?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Ascension Day always falls on a Thursday (May 18 this year) and marks the last appearance of Jesus to the disciples after his resurrection. It also marks the fortieth day after Easter Sunday. The Easter season ends ten days after Ascension Day. Finish reading the Gospel of John as the Easter season ends. There is an old tradition that the clouds on Ascension Day took the form of lambs in honor of the Lamb of God. Go outside and look at the clouds in the sky. Think or talk about Jesus' ascension and say: **Alleluia! Jesus has ascended! Alleluia!**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)