

Bible Study
Seventh Sunday after Easter, Year A
May 28, 2017

[RCL] Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36; 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

Acts 1:6-14

At this point in Scripture, the disciples have devoted the last few years of their lives to following Jesus. During those years, they have witnessed amazing things: healings, the recovery of sight, abundance from nothing (five loaves and two fish), calming storms, and even raising people from the dead. And when all their hope was crushed as their Messiah was dragged off to his death, he soon came back, overturning and conquering death. They have seen all the wonders and signs, and they are ready for the final climactic event, for the promise to be fulfilled, the foretold happy ending- the ushering in of a new age and restoration of the Kingdom.

But instead, Jesus asserts that this is something God has set to happen when God deems fit, and until then, there is work to be done in spreading the Good News of Jesus to new places and bringing all people to know him in their hearts and lives.

- How do you see the church/parish you attend bringing the Good News of Jesus to people?
- Do you remember a time where the message or story of Jesus really 'sank in' and affected you?

Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36

"Father of orphans, defender of widows." Verse 5 of Psalm 68 holds these beautiful words. To me, they evoke a feeling of warmth and of a God who brings comfort to people whose situations and circumstances are anything but comfortable. The Psalmist here acknowledges God's goodness.

- Where do you find God's presence strongest in your life?
- Can you think of situations where things looked dismal but God provided in some way?
- Has God put special people in your life who have been there in these times?

1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

Much like today's Psalm, this passage from 1 Peter speaks of God's blessed assurance during times of trial. In the trying moments of our lives, it is good to remember our calling as Christians to always speak in truth, love, and understanding, just as Jesus did with all those with whom he came in contact. This does not mean we have to sugarcoat hard truths or hide our frustrations, but it does mean we must always keep in mind the well-being of our neighbor, even the neighbor

with whom we have a tough time. The Devil wants us to forsake Christ, and give into insensitivity and disregard of others. Resisting this temptation takes a lot of strength, but fortunately, we have Jesus to help and hold us up.

- Can you think of someone in your life who has shown patience, love, understanding, or endurance?
- If so, in what ways do you find inspiration from his or her personal example?

John 17:1-11

In this passage, Jesus gives the promise of Eternal Life to those who give themselves over to him as Lord. He also petitions God to protect his disciples and keep them united.

- As a disciple of Jesus, what is it that you think brings harmony and unity with fellow believers in your life and community of faith?
- What are some areas of opportunity with your fellow believers to build trust, support, and mutual understanding for the glorification of God?

Andrew (Drew) Christiansen is a senior at Bexley Seabury Seminary. He is a postulant in the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan and ecclesiastically endorsed by the Episcopal Church Office of Armed Forces Ministry. Drew is currently finishing his seminarian-internship at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wauwatosa, Wisc., a faith community he is so blessed to have been a part of. Drew enjoys reading history, promoting ecumenism (especially with Lutherans!), and listening to a wide, eclectic range of music. He also likes a good game of skee ball.

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