



Mary of Magdala, ECC—May 18, 2025

Celebrating the 5th Sunday of Easter—Together Wherever We are

Father Michael Nicosia Presiding

Welcome and Announcements

Lector Art Bavoso

Social Justice Reflection

Tom Moos

Entrance Song: Ye Sons and Daughters (V1; R; V4; R; V5; R)

Greeting

In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The grace and peace of Jesus our Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Greeting and Welcome

From the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica

Pope Leo quoted the first greeting of the Risen Christ:

“Peace be with all of you!”

It was a greeting he hoped would enter the hearts of all of people, everywhere
—“an unarmed peace and a disarming peace, humble and persevering.

It comes from God, God who loves us all unconditionally.”

He tied the Peace of Christ to a plea for unity

exercised in a project he championed even before his election:

Synodality—building bridges, with dialogue, with meetings, uniting us all to be one
people, always in peace.



As we prepare to celebrate the Sacrament that unites us, we pray:
Loving God, your Word becomes incarnate through human solidarity.

Penitential Rite

For the times competition has separated us from others, have mercy on us.

All: Have mercy on us.

For the times our differences have held more sway than our common values, have mercy on us. **All: Have mercy on us.**

For the times our certitude has prevented the possibility of our learning something new, have mercy on us. **All: Have mercy on us.**

May the God of our Holy Conversations have mercy on us,
✠ forgive us our sins, and bring us Christ's peace. **All: Amen.**

In response to God's inclusive invitation, united we sing:

Glory to God *Mass of the Joyful Heart*

Opening Prayer

Holy One, Christ your Eternal Word is incarnate
in and through your Church, particularly when we are united in holy conversation, in the sharing of our gifts, and in our loving service to one another and to our world.
Continue to empower your people through that same Jesus Christ
who, united with you and the Holy Spirit,
is alive live and active in our midst now and always. **All: Amen.**

Liturgy Of The Word

First Reading: Acts 8:26-36, 38-39; 14:21-27 *Lector Art Bavoso*

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.



An angel of God spoke to Philip, “Get up and head south on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, the desert route.” So he got up and set out. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, that is, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury, who had come to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning home. Seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. The Spirit said to Philip, “Go and join up with that chariot.” Philip ran up and heard the Ethiopian eunuch reading Isaiah the prophet and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

He replied, “How can I, unless someone instructs me?” So, he invited Philip to get in and sit with him. This was the scripture passage he was reading:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who will tell of his posterity? For his life is taken from the earth.”

Then the eunuch said to Philip in reply, “I beg you, about whom is the prophet saying this? About himself, or about someone else?” Then Philip opened his mouth and, beginning with this scripture passage, he proclaimed Jesus to him. As they traveled along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, there is water. What is to prevent my being baptized?” Then he ordered the chariot to stop, and Philip and the eunuch both went down into the water, and Philip baptized the Ethiopian. When they came out of the water, the Spirit of God snatched Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, but continued on his way rejoicing.

Meanwhile...

After Paul and Barnabas had proclaimed the good news to the city of Derbe and made a considerable number of disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. In each place, they strengthened the spirits of the disciples and exhorted them to persevere in the faith, saying, “It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the reign of God.”



They appointed presbyters for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, commended them to God in whom they had put their faith.

Then, they traveled through Pisidia and reached Pamphylia. After proclaiming the word at Perga they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed back to Antioch where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now accomplished.

When they arrived, they called the church together and related all that God had done through them, and how God had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas stayed there with the disciples for some time.

The Word of an Early Church Historian. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm: Isaiah 56: 1, 3-7 *Lector Art Bavoso*

Our response is: My house shall be a house of prayer for all.

This is a word from God:

“Make fair judgment your concern.

Guard the common good. Do what is right.

For soon all will be set right. My justice is coming.”

Response: My house shall be a house of prayer for all.

Do not let the foreigner who would follow God say,

“God will surely exclude me from the chosen people.”

Do not let the eunuch say, “I am just a dry tree.”

Response: My house shall be a house of prayer for all.

For this is God's word:

“To eunuchs who keep my Sabbath,

who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant



I will give them, in my house and within my walls,
a monument and a name. Better than offspring,
I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.”

Response: My house shall be a house of prayer for all.

To foreigners who join themselves to God to do the work of God,
and to love the name of God, and to be servants of God...

All these are welcome.

They will be joyful in my house of prayer!

For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

Response: My house shall be a house of prayer for all.

Second Reading: Revelation 21:1-6

Lector Gray LaFond

A reading from the Book of Revelation.

Then I saw new heavens and a new earth. The first heavens, and the first earth, had passed away. The sea was no more.

I saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of the skies, adorned as for a wedding day. I heard a loud voice calling: “See, God will make a home among the human race. God will dwell among them. They shall be God’s people. God will be with them, always, Immanuel! God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more. Mourning and sadness and pain will be no more. The old order is past and gone.”

Then the Holy One said, “See I am making all things new. Write this down, for these words are sure and true: It is accomplished! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty, I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water.

Listen to the Spirit speaking to God’s people. **All: Thanks be to God.**



Gospel Acclamation Alleluia *MOJH*



Gospel: John 20:24-31

May the Love of God be with you. **All: And also with you.**

Remember how Thomas, called the “Twin”, who was one of the Twelve, was not with the other disciples when the risen Jesus first came to them in the locked upper room? The Contemporary Catholic Lectionary skipped over the story this year, but I’m revisiting it today.

A Proclamation of the Gospel attributed to John. **All: Glory to you, O God.**

When the other disciples saw Thomas, they said,

“We have seen the Christ.”

But he replied, “Unless I can see the holes the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, unless I can put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

A week later, the disciples were again inside where they had been that first day, but this time Thomas was with them. Although the doors again were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.”

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here.

See my hands. Give me your hand. Put it into my side.

Do not be unbelieving, but believe.”

Thomas answered, “The Messiah! My God!”

Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me?

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his many disciples, which are not written in this book.

But these are written so that you may come to believe



that Jesus is the Chosen One, the Messiah, born of God,
and that through believing you may have life in the name of Jesus the Christ.
The Good News of Resurrection Hope. **All: Praise to You, Jesus the Christ.**

Homily: “Sharing Who We Are and What We Have Received” by Fr. Michael Nicosia

Creed

Phillip shared with the Eunuch what he understood of the Crucified and Risen Christ.
Centuries of holy conversations have contributed to what we understand and believe.

Blessing of Graduates Gray and Latifah *Mother Rosean*

Together let us profess our truth.

Our Truth (*Michael J. Nicosia © 2020; 2024*)

We believe in God, our Mother out-pouring, our Father uniting,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and yet to be revealed.

We believe in Jesus Christ, our brother and teacher,

the Word eternally spoken by God

through whom all things were made and hold together.

By the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary,
and became fully human.

For the sake of the truth he suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried,
and on the third day rose from the dead.

He ascended into heaven yet remains active in our midst.

He will come again in glory to unite the living and the dead,
and our communion with him will have no end.



We believe in the Holy Spirit, the spirit of truth and giver of life,
who with the Father and the Son models equality in diversity
and the blessings that proceed from self-giving love.
With the Father and the Son, She is worshiped and glorified.
We believe in the ways She unites us: through her prophetic challenge,
through the Body of Christ, the Church, in our shared baptism,
in our sacrifices on behalf of others, in our hope in the resurrection,
and in the fulfillment of God's promise in eternity. Amen.

Prayers of the People *Lector Gray LaFond*

Fr. Michael: In holy solidarity, let us pray for the needs of the Church and the world.

Gray: **Our response is: Risen Christ, hear our prayers.**

Pope Leo has begun his ministry of bridge-building by calling for peace in our divided world; that his prophetic challenge may be heard and bear fruit, we pray, **Response: Risen Christ, hear our prayers.**

For all countries, that their leaders may be open to listening to the people and what they really need; that personal power will be replaced by true servant leadership, we pray, **Response: Risen Christ, hear our prayers.**

For all churches, faith denominations, and spiritual traditions that they may be a light to all that love is better than exclusion, racism, and hate, we pray, **Response: Risen Christ, hear our prayers.**



For all who are sick, physically or mentally, or recovering from medical procedures that they may receive God's healing graces and return to wholeness in body, mind, and spirit, we pray, **Response: Risen Christ, hear our prayers.**

I will now read the prayer requests from the people in the sanctuary and on the chat feature, we pray...**Response: Risen Christ, hear our prayers.**

Are there prayers from those on zoom? We pray,

Response: Risen Christ, hear our prayers.

And for all the people on our prayer list and all the prayers you hold in your hearts, we pray, **Response: Risen Christ, hear our prayers.**

Father Michael: Holy God, attentive to every need,

we are witnesses to the Risen Christ's presence in our midst.

Hear our prayers, and through them transform our attentiveness,

that we may love and serve all the more, to your honor and glory

forever and ever . **All: Amen.**

The Peace

Risen One, your disciples were assured of your presence by the peace you gave them.

Look on our faith and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom where you live and reign now and always. Amen.

May the peace of Christ be with you always. **All: And also with you.**

Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's peace. Please turn to the camera first and extend peace to our members on zoom.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

We are united in our offerings of time, talent, and treasure



given for the up-building of God's church and its mission.

Please continue to give as you feel called and are able.

Let us sing together.

Offertory Song Be Not Afraid. V1; R; V2; R; V3; R)

Preparation of the Gifts *(during offertory song)*

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.

(if prayer audible) Blessed is God forever.

By the mystery of this water ✠ and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands.

It will become our spiritual drink. *(if prayer audible) Blessed is God forever.*

The Washing of Hands

Lord God, we ask you to receive us and to be pleased with the sacrifice we offer you with humble and contrite hearts. Lord, wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin.

Pray, my siblings in Christ, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, our almighty Father/Mother.

All: May God accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of God's name, for our good, and the good of all God's creation.

Prayer Over the Gifts



God, creator of the universe, in this paschal celebration you give us a share in your divine life. Through our stories shared, may the world recognize all of the incarnations of your love. This we ask in Jesus' name. **All: Amen.**

Preface, Mary our Mother and Our Inspiration by Michael J. Nicosia © 2013

Our God is with you.

All: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to our God.

Let us give thanks to our Loving God. **All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Creator God, ever faithful and true, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks. Your grace becomes active in the world through our cooperation with your saving will. For inspiration we look to the Blessed Virgin Mary who was filled with your Spirit, gave her flesh to your Word eternal and was herself transformed by her daily encounter with your divine presence in our world, who is Jesus, your Son.

Loving mother that she was, it must have been her attentiveness to the needs of those around her that instilled in her son a heart responsive to every need. Walking with her in the Sacred Mysteries of Christ's life we, too, become increasingly aware of your presence and your saving activity within us and beyond ourselves.

Transformed, we become part of the whole of your family universal;

and so we raise our voices with Mary our Mother and all the angels and saints in heaven and on earth to sing of your glory:

Holy Holy Holy *Mass of the Joyful Heart*

Eucharistic Prayer

We commit ourselves to the community of faith in which this song resonates, calling upon You, most merciful God, to send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon the offerings we have set before You.



Bless ✕ these gifts that they may become for us the body and blood of our Risen Lord—indeed, the bread of life and the cup of unity that transcends all that would divide us.

Before he was given up to death, a death he freely accepted, he took bread and gave you thanks, He broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

All: Take this, all of you, and eat it.

This is my body, which will be given up for you.

When the supper was ended, he took the cup of wine. Again, he gave you thanks and praise, gave the cup to the disciples, and said:

All: Take this, all of you, and drink from it.

This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all, so that sins may be forgiven. Do this, in memory of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Memorial Acclamation *Mass of Joyful Heart*

In memory of his death and resurrection, we offer you, Father/Mother, this life-giving bread, this saving cup. We thank you for counting us worthy to be in your presence and serve you. May all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit.

While we ask you to remember all our siblings of many faiths and spiritual paths, who each bring their own insights and blessings to our world, remember, too, your Church, united across the miles.

Make us grow in love, together with our 301 Faith Partners and all who continue to share the stories of your inclusive love.

Empower us as laypersons, bishops, deacons and priests for the special ministry given to the Body of Christ, praying especially for its local incarnation, in union with our bishop



Kae. Remember, Loving God, all those who have died...Welcome them into your glory with Mary, your Mother, Mary of Magdala, our patron, and all your apostles, martyrs, and saints as they enjoy the fullness of the communion that is our destiny.

Such is your promise of mercy and love, for ...

All: Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, Self-emptying, Life-giving God, for ever and ever.

Great Amen

Mass of the Joyful Heart

The Prayer of Jesus

Let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:

All: Abba/Amma, God, who are in heaven, holy is your name. Your kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

Lamb of God

Mass of Joyful Heart

Breaking of the Bread

May this mingling of the body and blood of Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it. Integral to our Resurrected Life, with faith in your love and mercy we eat your body and drink your blood. Let it not bring us condemnation, but health in mind and body.

The Shared Table

This table is the source and substance of our kinship with Christ and one another. In truth, all are welcome.



May the mystery of our participation in this sacred mystery enliven our faith, inspire our service, and incarnate Christ's love wherever we may be.

Let us affirm...

All: In this we are a Eucharistic People, the Body of Christ incarnate, the Blood of Christ poured out for the life of the world.

Behold Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Happy are we who are called to this communion.

All: Jesus, I am ready to receive you, and by your invitation I am here.

May the body and blood of Christ bring us to everlasting life.

Communion Song: In the Breaking of the Bread (V1; R; V2; R; V5; R; V6)

Prayer after Communion

God of wonders revealed and shared, the resurrection of our Anointed One testifies to your love and your power to save. Through this holy communion with your Son's self-gift let us live as an Easter people, inspired to share our stories and our gifts, furthering the mission of your Church in promoting diversity, equity and inclusion and the life that flows from it. This we ask and can do through the same Jesus, our Risen brother.

All: Amen.

Blessing of Father Michael *Mother Rosean*

Concluding Rite and Dismissal

God's love is obviously with you. **All: And also with you.**



May almighty God bless you:

the Source of All-being, ✠ the Eternal Word and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The journey continues. Let us go in peace to love and serve God and one another.

All: Thanks be to God.

Closing Song: “Bless Our Way”

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Bless our way, our hopes for our tomorrows.

Bless this day as we begin anew.

Bless our way, our hopes for our tomorrows.

For this day the light we bear shines through.

For the Spirit kindles in us passion

that we may be Christ to one and all.

So we carry love through our compassion

being church that's faithful to our call.

Bless our way, our hopes for our tomorrows.

Bless this day as we begin anew.

Bless our way, our hopes for our tomorrows.

For this day the light we bear shines through.