

# JOHN



**A**t the outset, the first three Gospels may have us overlook the work and skills of its writers. Whatever vision they wanted to transmit about their Savior, they dealt so plainly with the witnesses that oftentimes we seem to have seen and heard Jesus himself.

The fourth Gospel unfolds in a different setting than the other three. To start with, while Jesus' activity in Galilee occupied a major part of the Synoptics, the fourth Gospel does not say much about it. It deals with what Jesus did between his baptism by John and his return to Galilee (Jn 1–3) and after that, almost everything takes place in Jerusalem. There, within the framework of the pilgrimage feasts, our author observes the mounting conflicts between Jesus and Jewish authorities. He seems to be at home, aware of what is going on behind the scenes of power, namely among the priests.

The difference in tone is even more important. Whether John is dealing with scenes or miracles of Jesus or with the discourses that

accompany them, everything bars the seal of a personal eyewitness. This is especially true for the discourses that the evangelist builds upon authentic words of Jesus, but thanks to John's prophetic gift, he is able to develop the intentions of Jesus and the deep meaning of his words and gestures. John does not let us ignore his purpose: "*These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*" (Jn 20:31). The faith of the Church proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God. But how should we understand this term? Though Jesus' resurrection had manifested the divine character of his person, one could wonder how and from what moment was Jesus Son of God and to what extent was he identified with God. John's Gospel clearly asserts that Jesus' existence was forever in God. This assertion on Jesus' origin helps us understand the range of his work. His discourses reaffirm the incredible promises of Jesus to those who believe in him, promises that, for John, became a reality.

The Gospel of John proclaims the existence of the Son of God *from all eternity*, and this light on the origin of Jesus immediately enlightens the scope of his work. Jesus, the eternal Son of God who became man, did not come to just teach us to be better but he came to transform creation.

This Gospel seems to have accompanied John throughout his life. He reworked it several times. A small paragraph added at the end suggests that the Gospel was published after the death of its author, about the year 95 A.D. Here we find an important element to understand John's mind. He finished writing twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Roman armies. John knows as well as Paul that Jesus' Resurrection originated a new age. The revelation to the Jewish people and the great liturgies in the temple belong, to a certain extent to the past, but in this first Covenant that has become the old Covenant are found the keys to the understanding of Jesus' achievements. This is why John will call to mind the Jewish feasts and religious symbols such as the water, the palms, the lamb... and he will show how these are transfigured in the Christian life and liturgy.

This is why three sections can be gleaned after an opening that we call the week of discovery (until 2:16). These are:

- In 2:17 Jesus goes up to the temple for the Passover: Chapters 2–5 develop the sign of the temple.

– In 6:4 the Passover is mentioned again and John develops the sign of bread.

– In 13:1 we find the third Passover, when Jesus is put to death at the moment in which the lambs are sacrificed in the temple. The lamb will be the third sign.

### **Is John the Author of the Gospel Called by His Name?**

This question is very difficult to answer. There are many reasons to doubt the authorship of the Apostle John, but there can be found as many reasons to vindicate the traditional attribution to John. John's message is so clear that it sets us on fire. Telling us that the one who marked him forever, the one he loved and who loved him, was the eternal Word of God, is really an astounding statement. Some would prefer someone else, not an eyewitness, to have written the Gospel. It could have been some theologian who might have more readily idealized Jesus because from a distance, he would not have had all the evidence of his human presence, his way of looking, eating, and the smell of his sweat...

This explains, for the most part, the countless hypotheses that have been built up for a century to attribute this Gospel to a theologian from the second generation after Jesus. None of these have gathered convincing proofs.

However, we have to admit that there are many reasons to doubt that the author is John the Apostle. The main reason is the following: could John, the Galilean fisherman, have written the theological and mystical discourses proper of this Gospel? Naturally, it is not impossible.

But there is still more! The one who gave their final shape to the discourses, in the years 70–80 A.D., probably near Ephesus where an ancient tradition asserts that John had retired, is not only a theologian but he must also have been a priest (18:15) because of his interest for the liturgy and the temple. Can this fit with the person of John, Zebedee's son, a fisherman of Tiberiades? Is it possible that such a vision of Jesus, the Messiah, and then the Son of God, Savior of the world, had been borne in him and that he has expressed it in his Gospel?

### **The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved**

We have always thought that the fourteen mentions (2 x 7) of *the disciple whom Jesus loved* in the latter part of the Gospel referred to the

author himself. Verse 21:24, added after his death, state it explicitly. This beloved disciple was identified with John the Apostle, the brother of James and the son of Zebedee and he was thought to be the youngest of the Twelve. But what was actually known about it?

Zebedee the fisherman might have been a priest. However, the evangelist says nothing about part of the ministry of Jesus in Galilee, about the transfiguration... and even in 21:2, he appears to have been one of the *two disciples* (as in 1:35) and therefore, not the son of Zebedee.

It is only at the Last Supper that the author really enters into the Gospel. We see him in the seat of honor, the seat that rightfully belonged to the host. Could he have been the owner who welcomed Jesus and his disciples (Lk 22:12)? And from then on, he could have accompanied Peter. He can venture to be at the foot of the cross while the Galilean group thought only about escaping from reprisal. Jesus entrusted Mary to him and a few moments later, he understood everything.

The indications that would allow to attribute this Gospel to another John, a priest from Jerusalem and different from Zebedee's son are, then as numerous as the ones that give preference to the latter one and it is difficult to give preference to one of them. However, it is a very interesting clue that leads to many discoveries. Specifically, in Chapter 19:31-37, the author of the Gospel reports the precise event that so deeply moved him and gave him access to the mystery of Jesus. He was really a priest.

We may have met believers who are deeply and truly theologians though they have not passed through university. They encountered some outstanding personality and this was enough to awaken their gifts. Later they became one of these few apostles who continually go over the events and the discoveries of this ministry, always eager to understand the ways of God. Do they need some books, some friends to help them to mature in their thinking? The same God who pours in them wisdom will direct to them this kind of help.

Can't this be the case of John, so close to Jesus and then Apostle for some sixty years? He did not go, as Paul did through rabbinical schools, and this is why he does not use sophisticated arguments, but ever so, couldn't he be a theologian, this someone who knows God?

## **Composition of the Gospel of John**

There have been many attempts to determine the structure of the Gospel of John. We present here a division in three great sessions. These all begin with the expression: the time/hour that appears three times.

It is also important to bear in mind the frequency of Jewish feasts. The Passover appears three times, and then a “feast,” the Tents, the Dedication of the Temple.

**Prologue:** The first week: 1:1—2:11.

**First Part:** The presentation of God’s gift: 2:12—6:71.

**Second Part:** Rejection of the world and homicidal attempts: 7:1—12:50.

**Third Part:** Jesus completes his work bringing to perfection the love for his people: Chapters 13–20.

**Conclusion:** The author’s purpose: 20:30-31.

**Epilogue:** Until his return.

# JOHN



## The Word became a human

**1** <sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word.

And the Word was with God  
and the Word was God;

<sup>2</sup>he was in the beginning with God.

<sup>3</sup>All things were made through him,  
and without him nothing came to be.  
Whatever has come to be, <sup>4</sup>found life in him;  
life, which for human beings was also light,  
<sup>5</sup>light that shines in darkness,  
light that darkness could not overcome.

<sup>6</sup>A man came, sent by God;  
his name was John.

<sup>7</sup>He came to bear witness,  
as a witness to introduce the Light,  
so that all might believe through him.

<sup>8</sup>He was not the Light,  
but a witness to introduce the Light;

<sup>9</sup>for the Light was coming into the world  
the true Light that enlightens everyone.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world  
and through him, the world was made,  
the very world that did not know him.

<sup>11</sup>He came to his own,  
yet his own people did not receive him;

<sup>12</sup>but to all who received him,  
he empowers to become children of God,  
for they believe in his name.

<sup>13</sup>These are born, but not by seed  
or carnal desire, nor by the will of man:  
they are born of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us;  
and we have seen his glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father:  
fullness of truth and loving-kindness.

<sup>15</sup>John bore witness to him openly saying,  
“This is the one who comes after me,  
but he is already ahead of me,  
for he was before me.”

<sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received  
favor upon favor.

<sup>17</sup>For God had given us the law through Moses,  
but Truth and Loving-kindness  
came through Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God,  
but God-the-only-Son made him known:  
the one who is in and with the Father.

### JOHN 1:1-18

**Read:** The prologue provides the theological key to the whole Gospel: Jesus Christ is the incarnate Word who reveals the glory of God in the world. He came to his own and his own did not receive him, but those who welcomed him he “made them able to become children of God.” The prologue is poetry and can only be appreciated after several readings.

**Reflect:** Can you feel and recognize the close presence of the Word of God in your life?

**Pray:** The Christian prays to God the Father through the Son. Give thanks to the Father for the gift of the Word. Ask the Spirit to accompany you to understand the Word of God.

**Act:** Reread the prologue at a leisurely pace and allow it to resonate inside you. Notice individual words that catch your attention: Beginning, Word, be with God, all, none, light, darkness.

*FIRST PART:  
JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF THROUGH SIGNS*

**John the Baptist presents Jesus, the Lamb of God**

<sup>19</sup>This was the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites to ask him, “Who are you?” <sup>20</sup>John recognized the truth and did not deny it. He said, “I am not the Messiah.”

<sup>21</sup>And they asked him, “Then who are you? Elijah?” He answered, “I am not.” They said, “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” <sup>22</sup>Then they said to him, “Tell us who you are so that we can give some answer to those who sent us. How do you see yourself?” <sup>23</sup>And John said, quoting the prophet Isaiah, “I am the *voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord!*”

<sup>24</sup>Those who had been sent were Pharisees; <sup>25</sup>and they put a further question to John, “Then why are you baptizing if you are not the Messiah, or Elijah, or the Prophet?” <sup>26</sup>John answered, “I baptize you with water, but among you stands one whom you do not know; <sup>27</sup>although he comes after me, I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandal.”

<sup>28</sup>This happened in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

<sup>29</sup>The next day, John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “There is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup>It is he of whom I said: A man comes after me who is already ahead of me for he was before me. <sup>31</sup>I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing to prepare for him, so that he might be revealed in Israel.”

<sup>32</sup>And John also gave this testimony, “I saw the Spirit coming down on him like a dove from heaven and resting on him. <sup>33</sup>I myself did not know him, but God, who sent me to baptize, told me, ‘You will see the Spirit coming down and resting on the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup>Yes, I have seen! And I declare that this is the Chosen One of God!”

**Jesus meets the first disciples**

<sup>35</sup>On the following day, John was standing there again with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup>As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and said, “There is the Lamb of God.” <sup>37</sup>On hearing this, the two disciples followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup>He turned and saw them following and he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They answered, “Rabbi (which means Master), where are you staying?” <sup>39</sup>Jesus said, “Come and see.” So they went and saw

where he stayed and spent the rest of that day with him. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

<sup>40</sup>Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard what John had said and followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup>Early the next morning, he found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means *the Christ*), <sup>42</sup>and he brought Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John, but you shall be called Cephas" (which means Rock).

<sup>43</sup>The next day, Jesus decided to set off for Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." <sup>44</sup>Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter. <sup>45</sup>Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the law and the prophets: he is Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

<sup>46</sup>Nathanael replied, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." <sup>47</sup>When Jesus saw Nathanael coming, he said of him, "Here comes an Israelite, a true one; there is nothing false in him." <sup>48</sup>Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?" And Jesus said to him, "Before Philip called you, you were under the fig tree and I saw you."

<sup>49</sup>Nathanael answered, "Master, you are the Son of God! You are the king of Israel!" <sup>50</sup>But Jesus replied, "You believe because I said, 'I saw you under the fig tree.' But you will see greater things than that.

<sup>51</sup>Truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

### JOHN 1:19-51

**Read:** John is not the Messiah, but his mission is to announce him: "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." And upon realizing it, two of his disciples follow Jesus. One of them, Andrew, announces him to his brother Simon, who also follows Jesus. And something similar happens with Philip who presents the Master to his friend Nathaniel.

**Reflect:** What does the title "Lamb of God" remind you of? How is Jesus your Messiah in daily life? Jesus has already saved the world and through your baptism you participate in the kingdom of God. Do you see yourself in the first disciples who

recognized Jesus? How do you communicate and share your faith with others?

**Pray:** Pray that people recognize they are loved by God in Jesus. Pray that, like the first disciples, you also be eager to meet the Master, the Son of God, and the Word made flesh.

**Act:** Point out five instances in which you recognized Jesus as the savior, and share it with others.

## The wedding at Cana

**2**<sup>1</sup>Three days later there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup>Jesus was also invited to the wedding with his disciples. <sup>3</sup>When all the wine provided for the celebration had been served and they had run out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” <sup>4</sup>Jesus replied, “Woman, what concern is that to you and me? My hour has not yet come.”

<sup>5</sup>However, his mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

<sup>6</sup>Nearby were six stone water jars set there for ritual washing as practiced by the Jews; each jar could hold twenty or thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup>Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them to the brim. <sup>8</sup>Then Jesus said, “Now draw some out and take it to the steward.” So they did.

<sup>9</sup>The steward tasted the water that had become wine without knowing from where it had come; for only the servants who had drawn the water knew. Immediately he called the bridegroom <sup>10</sup>and said, “Everyone serves the best wine first, and when people have drunk enough, he serves that which is ordinary. But you have kept the best wine until the end.”

<sup>11</sup>This miraculous sign was the first and Jesus performed it at Cana in Galilee. In this way, he showed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

<sup>12</sup>After this, Jesus went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they stayed there for a few days.

### JOHN 2:1-12

**Read:** The Messiah’s time will be like a wedding feast in which will be wine in abundance. This Gospel never calls the mother of Jesus by name. Mary responds to the needs of the couple

asking Jesus to do something. Jesus resists at first, but then performs the miracle of turning the water into wine, the first sign that he is the Messiah.

**Reflect:** Think about the relationship between Jesus and his mother. What significance do you attribute to the miracle of water being turned into abundant wine? Have you ever had the experience of being surprised by God?

**Pray:** Mary asks a favor. In your prayer, ask anything you need. Ask for the intercession of Mary when you pray.

**Act:** Pray the Rosary or a special prayer to Mary, the Mother of the Lord. As with Mary, may your prayer be an intercession for others.

### Jesus clears the temple

<sup>13</sup>As the Passover of the Jews was at hand, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the temple court, he found merchants selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and moneychangers seated at their tables. <sup>15</sup>Making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple court, together with the oxen and sheep. He knocked over the tables of the moneychangers, scattering the coins <sup>16</sup>and ordered the people selling doves, “Take all this away and stop making a marketplace of my Father’s house!”

<sup>17</sup>His disciples recalled the words of Scripture: *Zeal for your house devours me like fire.*

<sup>18</sup>The Jews then questioned Jesus, “Where are the miraculous signs which give you the right to do this?” <sup>19</sup>And Jesus said, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.” <sup>20</sup>The Jews then replied, “The building of this temple has already taken forty-six years and will you raise it up in three days?”

<sup>21</sup>Actually, Jesus was referring to the temple of his body. <sup>22</sup>Only when he had risen from the dead did his disciples remember these words; then they believed both the Scripture and the words Jesus had spoken.

<sup>23</sup>Jesus stayed in Jerusalem during the Passover Festival and many believed in his name when they saw the miraculous signs he performed.

<sup>24</sup>But Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew all of them.

<sup>25</sup>He had no need for evidence about anyone for he himself knew what there was in each one.

**JOHN 2:13-25**

**Read:** Jesus goes to Jerusalem and cleanses the temple of moneychangers and sellers. Then, he refers to his body as if he was the new temple. People do not know him yet they believe him because of his miracles, but Jesus knows their hearts and does not trust them.

**Reflect:** Was Jesus, with the cleansing of the temple, the one who started the confrontation with the religious authorities? Could it be that the real conflict begins with those who used the temple for their own purposes? There are two temples, the one Jesus sees needs to be cleansed, and the temple that is Jesus. How can this be applied to the ways in which we worship God today?

**Pray:** Pray that the temple be always a place of encounter with God, a place of prayer. Pray also that each member of the Body of Christ, each Christian, may honor the Father.

**Act:** Visit a church and pray for every member of the Body of Christ, especially by their leaders and those who suffer the most.

**Jesus and Nicodemus**

**3**<sup>1</sup> Among the Pharisees there was a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus. <sup>2</sup>He came to Jesus by night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you have come from God to teach us, for no one can perform miraculous signs like yours unless God is with him.”

<sup>3</sup>Jesus replied, “Truly, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again from above.”

<sup>4</sup>Nicodemus said, “How can there be a rebirth for a grown man? Who could go back to his mother’s womb and be born again?” <sup>5</sup>Jesus replied, “Truly, I say to you: No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup>What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup>Because of this, don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again from above.’

<sup>8</sup>The wind blows where it pleases and you hear its sound, but you don’t know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

<sup>9</sup>Nicodemus asked again, “How can this be?” <sup>10</sup>And Jesus answered, “You are a teacher in Israel and you don’t know these things!

<sup>11</sup>Truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and we witness to the things we have seen, but you don’t accept our testimony. <sup>12</sup>If you don’t believe when I speak of earthly things, what then when I speak to you of heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ever gone up to heaven except the one who came from heaven, the Son of Man.

<sup>14</sup>As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>so that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>Yes, God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but may have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world; instead, through him, the world is to be saved. <sup>18</sup>Whoever believes in him will not be condemned. He who does not believe is already condemned because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

<sup>19</sup>This is how Judgment is made: Light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup>For whoever does wrong, hates the light and doesn’t come to the light for fear that his deeds will be seen as evil. <sup>21</sup>But whoever lives according to the truth comes into the light so that it can be clearly seen that his works have been done in God.”

### **John the Baptist’s last testimony**

<sup>22</sup>After this, Jesus went into the territory of Judea with his disciples. He stayed there with them and baptized. <sup>23</sup>John was also baptizing in Aenon, near Salim, where water was plentiful; people came to him and were baptized. <sup>24</sup>This happened before John was put in prison.

<sup>25</sup>Now John’s disciples had been questioned by a Jew about spiritual cleansing <sup>26</sup>so they came to John and said, “Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan and about whom you spoke favorably, is now baptizing and all are going to him.”

<sup>27</sup>John answered, “No one can receive anything except what has been given to him from heaven. <sup>28</sup>You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, ‘I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.’ <sup>29</sup>Only the bridegroom has the bride, but the friend of the bridegroom stands by and listens and rejoices to hear the bridegroom’s voice. My joy is now full. <sup>30</sup>It is necessary that he increase, but that I decrease.

<sup>31</sup>He who comes from above is above all; he who comes from the earth belongs to the earth and his words belong to the earth. He who comes from heaven <sup>32</sup>speaks of the things he has seen and heard; he bears witness to these things, but no one accepts his testimony. <sup>33</sup>Whoever does receive his testimony acknowledges the truthfulness of God.

<sup>34</sup>The one sent by God speaks God's words and gives the Spirit unstintingly. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything into his hands. <sup>36</sup>Whoever believes in the Son lives with eternal life; but he who will not believe in the Son will never know life and always faces the justice of God."

### JOHN 3:1-36

**Read:** Nicodemus is a religious authority who wants to know Jesus more deeply, but he does not understand all that Jesus said. Jesus tells him to be born again accepting Jesus into his heart. Jesus is the world of God and the light of salvation God has sent into the world.

**Reflect:** What is the foundation of your faith in Jesus as the Son of God? What does believing in Jesus demands from you? How do you manifest your faith?

**Pray:** Thank God for the gift of faith and baptism. Ask the Holy Spirit to accompany you in your day to day, and grant you the grace you may need.

**Act:** At night, light a candle and see how light dispels the darkness. Reflect on how your faith can dispel the darkness of doubt in all areas of your life.

## Jesus and the Samaritan woman

**4**<sup>1</sup>The Lord knew that the Pharisees were informed about him; people said that Jesus was attracting and baptizing more disciples than John; <sup>2</sup>but in fact, it was not Jesus himself who was baptizing, but his disciples. <sup>3</sup>So Jesus left Judea and returned to Galilee. <sup>4</sup>He had to cross Samaria.

<sup>5</sup>He came to a Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup>Jacob's well is there. Tired from his journey, Jesus sat down by the well; it was about noon. <sup>7</sup>Now a Samaritan

woman came to draw water and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."<sup>8</sup> His disciples had just gone into town to buy some food.

<sup>9</sup>The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan and a woman, for a drink?" (For Jews, in fact, have no dealings with Samaritans.)<sup>10</sup> Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift of God! If you knew who it is who is asking you for a drink, you yourself would have asked me and I would have given you living water."

<sup>11</sup>The woman answered, "Sir, you have no bucket and this well is deep; where is your living water?"<sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well; he drank from it himself together with his sons and his cattle?"

<sup>13</sup>Jesus said to her, "Those who drink of this water will be thirsty again; <sup>14</sup>but those who drink of the water that I shall give will never be thirsty; for the water that I shall give will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

<sup>15</sup>The woman said to him, "Give me this water, that I may never be thirsty and never have to come here to draw water."<sup>16</sup> Jesus said, "Go, call your husband and come back here."<sup>17</sup> The woman answered, "I have no husband." And Jesus replied, "You are right to say, 'I have no husband';<sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands and the one you have now is not your husband. What you said is true."

<sup>19</sup>The woman then said to him, "I see you are a prophet; tell me this:<sup>20</sup> Our ancestors came to this mountain to worship God; but you Jews, do you not claim that Jerusalem is the only place to worship God?"

<sup>21</sup>Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you shall worship the Father, but that will not be on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know because salvation is from the Jews.<sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming and is even now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; for that is the kind of worshippers the Father wants.<sup>24</sup> God is Spirit and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth."

<sup>25</sup>The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah (that is the Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will tell us everything."<sup>26</sup> And Jesus said, "I who am talking to you, I am he."

<sup>27</sup>At this point the disciples returned and were surprised that Jesus was speaking with a woman; however, no one said, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"<sup>28</sup> So the woman left her water jar and

ran to the town. There she said to the people, <sup>29</sup>“Come and see a man who told me everything I did! Could he not be the Christ?” <sup>30</sup>So they left the town and went to meet him.

<sup>31</sup>In the meantime, the disciples urged Jesus, “Master, eat.” <sup>32</sup>But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you don’t know about.” <sup>33</sup>And the disciples wondered, “Has anyone brought him food?” <sup>34</sup>Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to carry out his work.

<sup>35</sup>You say that in four months there will be the harvest; now, I say to you, look up and see the fields white and ready for harvesting. <sup>36</sup>People who reap the harvest are paid for their work and the fruit is gathered for eternal life so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

<sup>37</sup>Indeed, the saying holds true: One sows and another reaps. <sup>38</sup>I sent you to reap where you didn’t work or suffer; others have worked and you are now sharing in their labors.”

<sup>39</sup>In that town, many Samaritans believed in him when they heard the woman who declared, “He told me everything I did.” <sup>40</sup>So when they came to him, they asked him to stay with them and Jesus stayed there for two days. <sup>41</sup>After that, many more believed because of his own words <sup>42</sup>and they said to the woman, “We no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard for ourselves and we know that this is the Savior of the world.”

<sup>43</sup>When the two days were over, Jesus left for Galilee. <sup>44</sup>Jesus himself said that no prophet is recognized in his own country. <sup>45</sup>Yet the Galileans welcomed him when he arrived because of all the things which he had done in Jerusalem during the Festival, and which they had seen. For they, too, had gone to the feast.

### JOHN 4:1-45

**Read:** Jews regarded Samaritans heretics, and would never talk to a Samaritan woman alone in public places. However, the saving action of Jesus does not conform to local customs, he reached out to everyone. Unlike Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman accepts the words of the Master and becomes an apostle for the people of her town.

**Reflect:** What does the expression “God is Spirit and those

who worship him must worship in spirit and truth” suggests to you regarding your religious practice?

**Pray:** Everyone has prejudices. Pray that you may be able to recognize and work to overcome them. May they be recognized and overcome in your daily life. Pray also that within the Church there may not be prejudices but understanding and acceptance for all.

**Act:** Encourage the recognition of women’s work in your community, both social and ecclesial. Approach women pastoral workers, those responsible for administration, pastoral care, liturgy, the choir, the cleaning, etc., of your parish, and thank them for their service to the community.

### Jesus cures the son of an official

<sup>46</sup> Jesus went back to Cana of Galilee, where he had changed the water into wine. At Capernaum, there was an official whose son was ill <sup>47</sup> and when he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and asked him to come and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

<sup>48</sup> Jesus said, “(Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe!” <sup>49</sup> The official said, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” <sup>50</sup> And Jesus replied, “Go, your son lives!”

The man had faith in the word that Jesus spoke to him and went his way. <sup>51</sup> As he was approaching his house, his servants met him and gave him the good news, “Your son has recovered!” <sup>52</sup> So he asked them at what hour the child began to recover and they said to him, “The fever left him yesterday, at about one o’clock in the afternoon.” <sup>53</sup> And the father realized that that was the time when Jesus had told him, “Your son lives!” And he became a believer, he and all his family.

<sup>54</sup> Jesus performed this second miraculous sign when he returned from Judea to Galilee.

#### JOHN 4:46-54

**Read:** On his return to Galilee, Jesus performs his second sign, healing from a distance the son of a royal official. He contrasts the faith of the official and those following him who believe only if they see signs and wonders.

**Reflect:** What is this passage telling you for your daily faith? Why do you believe in God? Do you really believe in the liberating and saving power of Jesus Christ, or do you place limits to it?

**Pray:** The world is full of signs that can lead to faith. Pray to the Spirit that your eyes may be opened to the great signs that God gives to grow and mature in your faith experience, which is nothing else than the experience of love and service that Jesus taught.

**Act:** Look at the creation: the sun, the moon, the sea, the mountains, valleys, animals, people, etc. Give thanks to God for His kindness, contemplating His presence in all beings with whom you meet.

## The paralytic at the pool of Bethzatha

**5**<sup>1</sup>After this, there was a feast of the Jews and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>Now, by the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem, there is a pool (called Bethzatha in Hebrew) surrounded by five galleries. <sup>3</sup>In these galleries lay a multitude of sick people: blind, lame and paralyzed.

(<sup>4</sup>All were waiting for the water to move, for at times an angel of the Lord would descend into the pool and stir up the water; and the first person to enter the pool after this movement of the water, would be healed of whatever disease that he had.)

<sup>5</sup>There was a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup>Jesus saw him and because he knew how long this man had been lying there, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" <sup>7</sup>And the sick man answered, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is disturbed; so while I am still on my way, another steps down before me."

<sup>8</sup>Jesus then said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk!" <sup>9</sup>And at once the man was healed and he took up his mat and walked.

Now that day happened to be the *Sabbath*. <sup>10</sup>So the Jews said to the man who had just been healed, "It is the *Sabbath* and the law doesn't allow you to carry your mat." <sup>11</sup>He answered them, "The one who healed me said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk!'" <sup>12</sup>They asked him, "Who is the one who said to you: Take up your mat and walk?" <sup>13</sup>But the sick

man had no idea who it was who had cured him, for Jesus had slipped away among the crowd that filled the place.

<sup>14</sup>Afterward, Jesus met him in the temple court and told him, “Now you are well; don’t sin again, lest something worse happen to you.”

<sup>15</sup>And the man went back and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. <sup>16</sup>So the Jews persecuted Jesus because he performed healings like that on the *Sabbath*.

<sup>17</sup>Jesus replied, “My *Father* goes on working and so do I.” <sup>18</sup>And the Jews tried all the harder to kill him, for Jesus not only broke the *Sabbath* observance, but also made himself equal with God, calling God his own *Father*.

### **The work of the Son is to give life**

<sup>19</sup>Jesus said to them, “Truly, I assure you, the Son cannot do anything by himself, but only what he sees the *Father* do. And whatever he does, the Son also does. <sup>20</sup>The *Father* loves the Son and shows him everything he does; and he will show him even greater things than these so that you will be amazed.

<sup>21</sup>As the *Father* raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son gives life to whom he wills. <sup>22</sup>In the same way, the *Father* judges no one, for he has entrusted all judgment to the Son, <sup>23</sup>and he wants all to honor the Son, as they honor the *Father*. Whoever ignores the Son, ignores as well the *Father* who sent him.

<sup>24</sup>Truly, I say to you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life; and there is no judgment for him because he has passed from death to life.

<sup>25</sup>Truly, the hour is coming and has indeed come, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and, on hearing it, will live. <sup>26</sup>For the *Father* has life in himself and he has given to the Son also to have life in himself. <sup>27</sup>And he has empowered him as well to carry out Judgment, for he is Son of Man.

<sup>28</sup>Do not be surprised at this: the hour is coming when all those lying in tombs will hear my voice <sup>29</sup>and come out; those who have done good shall rise to live and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

<sup>30</sup>I can do nothing of myself. As I hear, so I judge, and my judgment is just because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

<sup>31</sup>If I bore witness to myself, my testimony would be worthless. <sup>32</sup>But Another One is bearing witness to me and I know that his testimony is true when he bears witness to me. <sup>33</sup>John also bore witness to the truth when you sent messengers to him, <sup>34</sup>but I do not seek such human testimony; I recall this for you, so that you may be saved.

<sup>35</sup>John was a burning and shining lamp and for a while, you were willing to enjoy his light. <sup>36</sup>But I have greater evidence than that of John—the works, which the *Father* entrusted to me to carry out. The very works I do bear witness: the *Father* has sent me. <sup>37</sup>Thus he who bears witness to me is the Father who sent me. You have never heard his voice and have never seen his likeness; <sup>38</sup>therefore, as long as you do not believe his messenger, his word is not in you.

<sup>39</sup>You search in the Scriptures, thinking that in them you will find life; yet Scripture bears witness to me. <sup>40</sup>But you refuse to come to me that you may live. <sup>41</sup>I am not seeking human praise; <sup>42</sup>but I know that the love of God is not within you, <sup>43</sup>for I have come in my *Father's* name and you do not accept me. If another comes in his own name, you will accept him. <sup>44</sup>As long as you seek praise from one another, instead of seeking the glory, which comes from the only God, how can you believe?

<sup>45</sup>Do not think that I shall accuse you to the *Father*. Moses himself, in whom you placed your hope, accuses you. <sup>46</sup>If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me. <sup>47</sup>But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?

### JOHN 5:1-47

**Read:** Jesus violates the Sabbath laws by healing a cripple. God gave Jesus the authority, to give life. Faith in him brings us eternal life. No one needs fear judgment or death since the one who reaches the light (to Jesus) has passed through both.

**Reflect:** What does “eternal life” mean to you? What about judgment and death? What in this long chapter help you to understand faith? How do you keep the Sabbath holy?

**Pray:** If eternal life has already begun, you should be happy. Pray to obtain inner peace regarding the future. Pray with

confidence because God loves you by sending his Son into the world to bring salvation.

**Act:** Behave according to the desires that your heart and your faith dictate. Good deeds are always well received by God.

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7 <sup>19</sup>Moses gave you the law, didn't he? But none of you keep the law. Why, then, do you want to kill me?"

<sup>20</sup>The people replied, "You have a demon; who wants to kill you?"

<sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them, "I performed just one deed and you are all astounded by it. <sup>22</sup>But remember the circumcision ordered by Moses—actually it was not Moses but the ancestors who began this practice. You circumcise a man, even on the Sabbath, <sup>23</sup>and you would break the law if you refused to do so because of the Sabbath. How is it, then, that you are indignant with me because I healed the whole person on the Sabbath? <sup>24</sup>Do not judge by appearances, but according to what is right."

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### The multiplication of the loaves

(Mk 6:34; Mt 14:13; Lk 9:10)

**6**<sup>1</sup>After this, Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, near Tiberias <sup>2</sup>and large crowds followed him because of the miraculous signs they saw when he healed the sick. <sup>3</sup>So he went up into the hills and sat down there with his disciples. <sup>4</sup>Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.

<sup>5</sup>Then lifting up his eyes, Jesus saw the crowds that were coming to him and said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread so that these people may eat?" <sup>6</sup>He said this to test Philip, for he himself knew what he was going to do. <sup>7</sup>Philip answered him, "Two hundred silver coins would not buy enough bread for each of them to have a piece."

<sup>8</sup>Then one of Jesus' disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said, <sup>9</sup>"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many?"

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**7:19-24:** At the end of Chapter 5 we have placed the passage 7:19-24, which concludes the discourses but which, for some unknown reason, was placed after Chapter 6.

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." There was plenty of grass there, so the people, about five thousand men, sat down. <sup>11</sup> Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to those who were seated. He did the same with the fish and gave them as much as they wanted. <sup>12</sup> And when they had eaten enough, he told his disciples, "Gather up the pieces left over, that nothing may be lost."

<sup>13</sup> So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with bread, that is, with pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

<sup>14</sup> When the people saw the miracle, which Jesus had performed, they said, "This is really the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world."

<sup>15</sup> Jesus realized that they would come and take him by force to make him king; so he fled to the hills by himself.

<sup>16</sup> When evening came, the disciples went down to the shore. <sup>17</sup> After a while, they got into a boat to make for Capernaum on the other side of the sea, for it was now dark and Jesus had not yet come to them.

<sup>18</sup> But the sea was getting rough because a strong wind was blowing.

<sup>19</sup> They had rowed about three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the sea and he was drawing near to the boat. They were frightened, <sup>20</sup> but he said to them, "It is I! Don't be afraid!"

<sup>21</sup> They wanted to take him into the boat, but immediately the boat was at the shore to which they were going.

<sup>22</sup> Next day, the people, who had stayed on the other side, realized that only one boat had been there and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples; but rather, the disciples had gone away alone. <sup>23</sup> Other boats from Tiberias landed near the place where all these people had eaten the bread. <sup>24</sup> When they saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

<sup>25</sup> When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Master, when did you come here?"

<sup>26</sup> Jesus answered, "Truly, I say to you, you look for me, not because of the signs which you have seen, but because you ate bread and were satisfied. <sup>27</sup> Work then, not for perishable food, but for the lasting food which gives eternal life. The Son of Man will give it to you for he is the one on whom the Father has put his mark."

## The bread of life; to believe in the Son of God

<sup>28</sup>Then the Jews asked him, “What shall we do? What are the works that God wants us to do?” <sup>29</sup>And Jesus answered them, “The work God wants is this: that you believe in the One whom God has sent.”

<sup>30</sup>They then said, “Show us miraculous signs that we may see and believe you. What sign do you perform?” <sup>31</sup>Our ancestors ate manna in the desert; as Scripture says: *They were given bread from heaven to eat.*”

<sup>32</sup>Jesus then said to them, “Truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the *bread from heaven*. My Father gives you the true *bread from heaven*. <sup>33</sup>The bread God gives is the One who comes from heaven and gives life to the world.” <sup>34</sup>And they said to him, “Give us this bread always.”

<sup>35</sup>Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall never be hungry, and whoever believes in me shall never be thirsty. <sup>36</sup>Nevertheless, as I said, you refuse to believe, even when you have seen. <sup>37</sup>Yet all those whom the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I shall not turn away. <sup>38</sup>For I have come from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of the One who sent me.

<sup>39</sup>And the will of him who sent me is that I lose nothing of what he has given me, but instead that I raise it up on the last day. <sup>40</sup>This is the will of the Father, that whoever sees the Son and believes in him shall live eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day.”

### JOHN 6:1-40

**Read:** Jesus feeds the crowds. People see the sign and express their belief that Jesus is a prophet, but they mistakenly want to make him king. Jesus goes to the hills alone and then walks on the water. Jesus calls people to work not for the food that perishes but for the one that remains and gives eternal life.

**Reflect:** Why do you follow Jesus? Who is Jesus for you? What does the following expression suggest for your daily life: “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

**Pray:** Pray that you will have eternal bread in abundance, and also the daily food. Ask the Lord to grant you faith to act according to it. Pray always asking for the good of others.

**Act:** Seek Jesus in the brothers and sisters and serve them. Participate in the Eucharist to have the necessary food that never perishes and that gives eternal life.

<sup>41</sup>The Jews murmured because Jesus had said, “I am the bread *which comes from heaven*.” <sup>42</sup>And they said, “This man is the son of Joseph, isn’t he? We know his father and mother. How can he say that he has come from heaven?”

<sup>43</sup>Jesus answered them, “Do not murmur among yourselves. <sup>44</sup>No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise him up on the last day. <sup>45</sup>It has been written in the Prophets: *They shall all be taught by God*. So whoever listens and learns from the Father comes to me.

<sup>46</sup>For no one has seen the Father except the One who comes from God; he has seen the Father. <sup>47</sup>Truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

### **The body of Christ, the bread of life**

<sup>48</sup>I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup>Though your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, they died. <sup>50</sup>But here you have the *bread from heaven*, so that you may eat of it and not die.

<sup>51</sup>I am the living *bread from heaven*; whoever eats of this bread will live forever. The bread I shall give is my flesh, and I will give it for the life of the world.”

#### **JOHN 6:41-51**

**Read:** Jesus’ discourse generates the murmuring of the people, like the Israelites in the desert. This means that people close themselves to God’s action. Jesus calls (it is imperative) not to “gossip” but to be open to the divine presence, for only then will the act of faith that produces life happens.

**Reflect:** Where does your faith in Jesus lead you? Or are you a Christian by “custom” or “family tradition”? Do you read the bible to nourish your Christian commitment? When you receive holy communion, what does it mean to you?

**Pray:** In prayer, ask the Lord to guide you in your day to day toward eternal life. At morning ask for help to live and share your faith during the day.

**Act:** Say the prayer that has been suggested to you in your reading of this biblical passage.

<sup>52</sup>The Jews were arguing among themselves, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” <sup>53</sup>So Jesus replied, “Truly, I say to you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. <sup>54</sup>The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

<sup>55</sup>My flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. <sup>56</sup>Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me and I in them. <sup>57</sup>Just as the Father, who is life, sent me and I have life from the Father, so whoever eats me will have life from me. <sup>58</sup>This is the bread from heaven; not like that of your ancestors who ate and later died. Those who eat this bread will live forever.”

<sup>59</sup>Jesus spoke in this way in Capernaum when he taught them in the synagogue.

### **Will you also go away?**

<sup>60</sup>After hearing this, many of Jesus’ followers said, “This language is very hard! Who can accept it?”

<sup>61</sup>Jesus was aware that his disciples were murmuring about this, and so he said to them, “Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup>Then how will you react when you see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? <sup>63</sup>It is the spirit that gives life, not the flesh. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. <sup>64</sup>But among you, there are some who do not believe.”

From the beginning, Jesus knew who would betray him. <sup>65</sup>So he added, “As I have told you, no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

<sup>66</sup>After this many disciples withdrew and no longer followed him. <sup>67</sup>Jesus asked the Twelve, “Will you also go away?” <sup>68</sup>Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup>We now believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

<sup>70</sup> Jesus said to them, “I chose you, the Twelve, did I not? Yet one of you is a devil.” <sup>71</sup> Jesus spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. He, one of the Twelve, was to betray him.

### JOHN 6:52-71

**Read:** Here is the reference to the Eucharist in the Gospel of John. Eating the glorious body of Jesus, the bread of life, the believer receives the overabundance of eternal life. This is a life that must be communicated to others. Many have difficulty accepting this teaching of the Teacher and leave. Instead, Peter, the spokesman for the disciples, reaffirms his faith.

**Reflect:** How does the Eucharist strengthen you? When Jesus says we must eat his flesh and drink his blood to have eternal life, what do you think he means? When asked if he will leave Jesus too, Peter says he has no place to go, Jesus has the words of eternal life. What does that mean for you?

**Pray:** Pray for growth in the understanding and appreciation of the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Pray for those who have difficulty accepting it.

**Act:** Make your heart a sanctuary of the Eucharist, that the brothers and sisters perceive that it is Jesus Christ who lives in you. Carry everywhere Peter’s conviction: “Lord, You have words of eternal life.”

## Jesus goes up to Jerusalem

**7**<sup>1</sup> After this, Jesus went around Galilee; he would not go about in Judea, because the Jews wanted to kill him. <sup>2</sup> Now the Jewish feast of the Tents was at hand. <sup>3</sup> So the brothers of Jesus said to him, “Don’t stay here; go instead to Judea and let your disciples see the works you are doing. <sup>4</sup> Anyone who wants to be known doesn’t work secretly. Since you are able to do these things, show yourself to the world.”

<sup>5</sup> His brothers spoke like this because they didn’t believe in him. <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always here.

<sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I bear witness and I show that its deeds are evil. <sup>8</sup> Go up to the feast! I am not going to this feast, because my time has not yet come.”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said these things and remained in Galilee. <sup>10</sup> But after his brothers had gone to the festival, he also went up, not publicly but in secret. <sup>11</sup> The Jews were looking for him at the festival and asked, "Where is he?" <sup>12</sup> There was a lot of talk about him among the people. Some said, "He is a good man," but others replied, "No, he is misleading the people." <sup>13</sup> For fear of the Jews, no one spoke openly about him.

<sup>14</sup> When the festival was half over, Jesus went to the temple and began to teach. <sup>15</sup> The Jews marveled and said, "How is it that he knows Scriptures when he has had no teacher?"

<sup>16</sup> And Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but it comes from the One who sent me. <sup>17</sup> Anyone who does the will of God shall know whether my teaching is from God, or whether I speak on my own authority.

<sup>18</sup> Those who speak on their own authority wish to gain honor for themselves. But the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is truthful and there is no reason to doubt him."

<sup>25</sup> Some of the people of Jerusalem said, "Is this not the man they want to kill? <sup>26</sup> And here he is speaking freely and they don't say a word to him? Can it be that the rulers know that this is really the Christ? <sup>27</sup> Yet we know where this man comes from; but when the Christ appears no one will know where he comes from."

<sup>28</sup> So Jesus announced in a loud voice in the temple court where he was teaching, "You say that you know me and know where I come from! I have not come of myself; I was sent by the One who is true and you don't know him. <sup>29</sup> I know him for I come from him, and he sent me."

<sup>30</sup> They would have arrested him, but no one laid hands on him because his time had not yet come. <sup>31</sup> Many people in the crowd, however, believed in him and said, "When the Christ comes, will he give more signs than this man?"

<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard all these rumors among the people; they and the chief priests sent officers of the temple to arrest him. <sup>33</sup> Jesus then said, "I shall be with you a little longer; after that, I shall go to him who sent me. <sup>34</sup> You will look for me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come."

<sup>35</sup> The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go, where we shall not find him? Will he go abroad to the Jews dispersed among the Greek nations and teach the Greeks also? <sup>36</sup> What does he

mean when he says, ‘You will look for me and not find me,’ and, ‘Where I am going you cannot come?’”

### The promise of living water

<sup>37</sup>On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me; <sup>38</sup>and let the one who believes in me drink, for the Scripture says: *Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.*”

<sup>39</sup>Jesus was referring to the Spirit, which those who believe in him were to receive; the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.

### Dispute on the origin of Christ

<sup>40</sup>Many who had been listening to these words began to say, “This is the Prophet.” <sup>41</sup>Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some wondered, “Would the Christ come from Galilee? <sup>42</sup>Doesn’t Scripture say that the Christ is a *descendant of David and from Bethlehem, the city of David?*” <sup>43</sup>The crowd was divided over him. <sup>44</sup>Some wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

<sup>45</sup>The officers of the temple went back to the chief priests who asked them, “Why didn’t you bring him?” <sup>46</sup>The officers answered, “No one ever spoke like this man.” <sup>47</sup>The Pharisees then said, “So you, too, have been led astray! <sup>48</sup>Have any of the rulers or any of the Pharisees believed in him? <sup>49</sup>Only these cursed people who have no knowledge of the law!”

<sup>50</sup>Yet one of them, Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier, spoke out, <sup>51</sup>“Does our law condemn people without first hearing them and knowing the facts?” <sup>52</sup>They replied, “Do you, too, come from Galilee? Look it up and see for yourself that no prophet is to come from Galilee.”

<sup>53</sup>And they all went home.

#### JOHN 7:1-53

**Read:** This chapter has many different events and ideas. Jesus decides not to go to the feast and then changes his mind. He teaches in the temple and people do not understand him. Opposition to Jesus grows. His adversaries want to arrest him.

Even though Jesus is life and salvation, the people “were divided on account of him.”

**Reflect:** At the festival people are divided about Jesus, some think him a good man while others think him a deceiver and seek to kill him. What do people think about Jesus today? Do you feel the thirst for eternal life to come to Jesus every day in the bread of the Word and the bread of the Eucharist? What is this “river of living water” that flows from the hearts of believers?

**Pray:** When you are thirsty for eternal life, pray to the Spirit who will lead you to Jesus. Pray to be an instrument of the Spirit for others.

**Act:** From the heart of the believer springs streams of living water. Let your faith find expression in how you live this day; in this way, you will help others to confirm their beliefs, their hopes, and life options.

## The adulteress

**8**<sup>1</sup>As for Jesus, he went to the Mount of Olives.

<sup>2</sup>At daybreak, Jesus appeared in the temple again. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them.

<sup>3</sup>Then the teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They made her stand in front of everyone. <sup>4</sup>“Master,” they said, “this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. <sup>5</sup>Now, the law of Moses orders that such women be stoned to death; but you, what do you say?” <sup>6</sup>They said this to test Jesus in order to have some charge against him.

Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. <sup>7</sup>And as they continued to ask him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let anyone among you who has no sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” <sup>8</sup>And he bent down again, writing on the ground.

<sup>9</sup>As a result of these words, they went away one by one, starting with the elders, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they?

Has no one condemned you?" <sup>11</sup> She replied, "No one." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go away and don't sin again."

### **I Am the light of the world**

<sup>12</sup> Jesus spoke to them again, "I am the Light of the world; the one who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have light and life."

<sup>13</sup> The Pharisees replied, "Now you are speaking on your own behalf, your testimony is worthless."

<sup>14</sup> Then Jesus said, "Even though I bear witness to myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I have come from and where I am going. But you do not know where I came from or where I am going.

<sup>15</sup> You judge by human standards; as for me, I don't judge anyone.

<sup>16</sup> But if I had to judge, my judgment would be valid for I am not alone: the Father who sent me is with me. <sup>17</sup> In your law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is valid; <sup>18</sup> so I am bearing witness to myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness to me."

<sup>19</sup> They asked him, "Where is your Father?" Jesus answered, "You don't know me or my Father; if you knew me, you would know my Father as well."

<sup>20</sup> Jesus said these things when he was teaching in the temple area, in the place where they received the offerings. No one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

<sup>21</sup> Again, Jesus said to them, "I am going away and though you look for me, you will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come."

<sup>22</sup> The Jews wondered, "Why does he say that we can't come where he is going? Will he kill himself?"

<sup>23</sup> But Jesus said, "You are from below and *I am* from above; you are of this world and *I am* not of this world. <sup>24</sup> That is why I told you that you will die in your sins. And you shall die in your sins unless you believe that *I am He*."

<sup>25</sup> They asked him, "Who are you?"; and Jesus said, "Just what I have told you from the beginning. <sup>26</sup> I have much to say about you and much to condemn; but the One who sent me is truthful and everything I learned from him, I proclaim to the world."

<sup>27</sup> They didn't understand that Jesus was speaking to them about the Father. <sup>28</sup> So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that *I am He* and that I do nothing of myself, but I say just

what the Father taught me. <sup>29</sup>He who sent me is with me and has not left me alone; because I always do what pleases him.”

### **The children of truth**

<sup>30</sup>As Jesus spoke like this, many believed in him. <sup>31</sup>Jesus went on to say to the Jews who believed in him, “You will be my true disciples if you keep my word. <sup>32</sup>Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.” <sup>33</sup>They answered him, “We are the descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves of anyone. What do you mean by saying: You will be free?”

<sup>34</sup>Jesus answered them, “Truly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave. <sup>35</sup>But the slave doesn’t stay in the house forever; the son stays forever. <sup>36</sup>So, if the Son makes you free, you will be really free.

<sup>37</sup>I know that you are the descendants of Abraham, yet you want to kill me because my word finds no place in you. <sup>38</sup>For my part, I speak of what I have seen in my Father’s presence, but you do what you have learned from your father.”

<sup>39</sup>They answered him, “Our father is Abraham.” Then Jesus said, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do as Abraham did. <sup>40</sup>But now you want to kill me, the one who tells you the truth—the truth that I have learned from God. That is not what Abraham did; <sup>41</sup>what you are doing are the works of your father.”

The Jews said to him, “We are not illegitimate children; we have one Father, God.” <sup>42</sup>Jesus replied, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came forth from God and I am here. And I didn’t come by my own decision, but it was he himself who sent me. <sup>43</sup>Why do you not understand my teaching? It is because you cannot bear my message.

<sup>44</sup>The father you spring from is the devil, and you will carry out the evil wishes of your father who has been a murderer from the beginning. He didn’t uphold the truth for, in him, there is no truth; and now, when he speaks for himself, he lies. He is a liar and the father of lies.

<sup>45</sup>Now I speak the truth and you don’t believe me. <sup>46</sup>Who among you can find anything false in me? Then, if I speak the truth, why do you not believe me? <sup>47</sup>He who is of God hears the words of God; you don’t hear because you are not of God.”

<sup>48</sup>The Jews retorted, “So we are right in saying that you are a Samaritan and are possessed by a demon.” <sup>49</sup>Jesus said, “I am not possessed,

and you try to shame me when I give honor to my Father. <sup>50</sup>I don't care about my own glory; there is One who cares for me and he will be the judge.

<sup>51</sup>Truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never experience death." <sup>52</sup>The Jews replied, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died and the prophets as well, but you say, 'Whoever keeps my word will never experience death.' Who do you claim to be? <sup>53</sup>Do you claim to be greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets who also died?"

<sup>54</sup>Then Jesus said, "If I were to praise myself, it would count for nothing. But he who gives glory to me is the Father, the very one you claim as your God, <sup>55</sup>although you don't know him. I know him and if I were to say that I don't know him, I would be a liar like you. But I know him and I keep his word.

<sup>56</sup>As for Abraham, your ancestor, he looked forward to the day when I would come; and he rejoiced when he saw it."

<sup>57</sup>The Jews then said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?" <sup>58</sup>And Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." <sup>59</sup>They then picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and left the temple.

### JOHN 8:1-59

**Read:** In this chapter Jesus forgives a guilty woman, declares himself the light his Father sends into the world, and anyone who loves God, will love him. All of these claims are hotly contested by religious people listening to him. Some even call Jesus a demon. In the end, they try to stone him to death but Jesus escapes.

**Reflect:** Should people avoid judging each other? Are not two people needed for adultery? Why is not man mentioned? Why the discussion on the validity of a "testimony"? What does the Devil have to do with all this? What does "I am the light of the world" mean in the mouth of Jesus?

**Pray:** People judge others too easily. Pray, so you can avoid making light judgments about others. Give others the benefit of the doubt.

**Act:** Avoid getting into arguments and judge too easily. Before any discussion, keep a serene attitude and fair spirit, irrespective of prejudices or sympathies. Remember that the only Teacher is Jesus.

### Jesus heals the man born blind

**9**<sup>1</sup>As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. <sup>2</sup>His disciples asked him, “Master, was he born blind because of a sin of his, or of his parents?”

<sup>3</sup>Jesus answered, “Neither was it for his own sin nor for his parents’ sin. He was born blind so that God’s power might be shown in him. <sup>4</sup>While it is day we must do the work of the One who sent me; for the night will come when no one can work. <sup>5</sup>As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

<sup>6</sup>As Jesus said this, he made paste with spittle and clay and rubbed it on the eyes of the blind man. <sup>7</sup>Then he said, “Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam.” (This word means *sent*.) So the blind man went and washed and came back able to see.

<sup>8</sup>His neighbors, and all the people who used to see him begging, wondered. They said, “Isn’t this the beggar who used to sit here?” <sup>9</sup>Some said, “He’s the one.” Others said, “No, but he looks like him.” But the man himself said, “I am he.” <sup>10</sup>Then they asked him, “How is it that your eyes were opened?” <sup>11</sup>And he answered, “The man called Jesus made a mud paste, put it on my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed and I could see.” <sup>12</sup>They asked, “Where is he?” And the man answered, “I don’t know.”

<sup>13</sup>The people brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. <sup>14</sup>Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made mud paste and opened his eyes. <sup>15</sup>The Pharisees asked him again, “How did you recover your sight?” And he said, “He put paste on my eyes, and I washed, and now I see.” <sup>16</sup>Some of the Pharisees said, “That man is not from God, for he works on the Sabbath”; but others wondered, “How can a sinner perform such miraculous signs?” They were divided <sup>17</sup>and they questioned the blind man again, “What do you think of this man who opened your eyes?” And he answered, “He is a prophet!”

<sup>18</sup>After all this, the Jews refused to believe that the man had been blind

and had recovered his sight; so they called his parents <sup>19</sup>and asked them, "Is this your son? You say that he was born blind, how is it that he now sees?" <sup>20</sup>The parents answered, "He really is our son and he was born blind; <sup>21</sup>but how it is that he now sees, we don't know, neither do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him, he is old enough. Let him speak for himself."

<sup>22</sup>The parents said this because they feared the Jews, who had already agreed that whoever confessed Jesus to be the Christ was to be expelled from the synagogue. <sup>23</sup>Because of that, his parents said, "He is old enough, ask him."

<sup>24</sup>So, a second time, the Pharisees called the man who had been blind and they said to him, "Tell us the truth; we know that this man is a sinner." <sup>25</sup>He replied, "I don't know whether he is a sinner or not; I only know that I was blind and now I see." <sup>26</sup>They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" <sup>27</sup>He replied, "I have told you already and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"

<sup>28</sup>Then they started to insult him. "Become his disciple yourself! We are disciples of Moses. <sup>29</sup>We know that God spoke to Moses; but as for this man, we don't know where he comes from."

<sup>30</sup>The man replied, "It is amazing that you don't know where the man comes from and yet he opened my eyes! <sup>31</sup>We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but if anyone honors God and does his will, God listens to him. <sup>32</sup>Never, since the world began, has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person who was born blind. <sup>33</sup>If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

<sup>34</sup>They answered him, "You were born a sinner and now you teach us!" And they expelled him.

<sup>35</sup>Jesus heard that they had expelled him. He found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" <sup>36</sup>He answered, "Who is he, that I may believe in him?" <sup>37</sup>Jesus said, "You have seen him and he is speaking to you." <sup>38</sup>He said, "Lord, I believe"; and he worshiped him.

<sup>39</sup>Jesus said, "I came into this world to carry out a judgment: Those who do not see shall see and those who see shall become blind." <sup>40</sup>Some Pharisees stood by, and asked him, "So we are blind?" <sup>41</sup>And Jesus answered, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty. But you say, 'We see'; this is the proof of your sin."

**JOHN 9:1-41**

**Read:** Jesus cures a blind man from birth on the Sabbath, and again stirring up controversy about the nature of God. In this story, it is actually the blind man who sees God at work, while the religious people are blind to actions of God they do not expect. It is possible that the community of John was thrown out of the synagogue, from Judaism, like the blind man healed by Jesus.

**Reflect:** Who is blind today in the Church and in the society? Are you blind to others? What do you not want to see? Compare the words of the blind man with the words of the religious authorities. Why do religious authorities refuse to see? Do you accuse others before examining your own motives?

**Pray:** We all have our blind spots. Pray to recognize those moments when you do not want to see what is obvious. Ask not to accuse others before examining their own points of view.

**Act:** Be sensitive to anyone who is handicapped. Never treat such a person as being inferior, but recognize their values and capacities, and think in what way they can help you. When that person could help you, ask him or her.

**The good shepherd**

**10**<sup>1</sup>Truly, I say to you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup>But the shepherd of the sheep enters by the gate. <sup>3</sup>The keeper opens the gate to him and the sheep hear his voice; he calls each of his sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>A stranger they will not follow, but rather they will run away from him because they don't recognize a stranger's voice."

<sup>6</sup>Jesus used this comparison, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup>So Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, I am the gate of the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came were thieves and robbers and the sheep did not hear them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved; he will go in and out freely and find food.

<sup>10</sup>The thief comes to steal and kill and destroy, but I have come that they may have life, life in all its fullness.

<sup>11</sup>I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>Not so the hired hand, or any other person who is not the shepherd and to whom the sheep do not belong. They abandon the sheep as soon as they see the wolf coming; then the wolf snatches and scatters the sheep. <sup>13</sup>This is because the hired hand works for pay and cares nothing for the sheep.

<sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>as the Father knows me and I know the Father. Because of this, I give my life for my sheep.

<sup>16</sup>I have other sheep, which are not of this fold. These I have to lead as well and they shall listen to my voice. Then there will be one flock since there is one shepherd.

<sup>17</sup>The Father loves me because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from me, but I lay it down freely. It is mine to lay down and to take up again: this mission I received from my Father.”

<sup>19</sup>Because of these words, the Jews were again divided. <sup>20</sup>Many of them said, “He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why listen to him?” <sup>21</sup>But others said, “A man possessed doesn’t speak in this way. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

## **Jesus claims to be the Son of God**

<sup>22</sup>The time came for the feast of the Dedication. It was winter, <sup>23</sup>and Jesus walked back and forth in the portico of Solomon. <sup>24</sup>The Jews then gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in doubt? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” <sup>25</sup>Jesus answered, “I have already told you, but you do not believe. <sup>26</sup>The works I do in my Father’s name, proclaim who I am, but you don’t believe because, as I said, you are not my sheep.

<sup>27</sup>My sheep hear my voice and I know them; they follow me <sup>28</sup>and I give them eternal life. They shall never perish, and no one will ever steal them from me. <sup>29</sup>What my Father has given me is greater than all things else. To snatch it out of the Father’s hand, no one is able! <sup>30</sup>I and the Father are One.”

<sup>31</sup>The Jews then picked up stones to throw at him; <sup>32</sup>so Jesus said, “I

have openly done many good works among you which the Father gave me to do. For which of these do you stone me?”

<sup>33</sup>The Jews answered, “We are not stoning you for doing a good work, but for insulting God; you are only a man and you make yourself God.”

<sup>34</sup>Then Jesus replied, “Is this not written in your law: *I said, you are gods?* <sup>35</sup>So those who received this word of God were called gods and the Scripture is always true. <sup>36</sup>What then should be said of the one anointed, and sent into the world by the Father? Am I insulting God when I say, ‘I am the Son of God’?”

<sup>37</sup>If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. <sup>38</sup>But if I do them, even if you have no faith in me, believe because of the works I do; and know that the Father is in me and I in the Father.”

<sup>39</sup>Again they tried to arrest him, but Jesus escaped from their hands. <sup>40</sup>He went away again to the other side of the Jordan, to the place where John had baptized and there he stayed.

<sup>41</sup>Many people came to Jesus and said, “John worked no miracles, but he spoke about you and everything he said was true.” <sup>42</sup>And many in that place became believers.

### JOHN 10:1-42

**Read:** Jesus is presented as the true shepherd of his people, who gives them food and security, who knows the sheep by name and gives his life for them. They know his voice and follow him. The controversy with religious leaders continues, up to the point of trying to stone him. When in John’s Gospel you read, “the Jews” remember he is talking about the religious leaders who were opposed to Jesus, not the Jewish people chosen by God.

**Reflect:** Do you hear the voice of the Good Shepherd? Since he knows you by name, does this make you feel good? What do you think of the opponents of Jesus? What could their motives be? What teachings of Jesus you particularly like in this passage?

**Pray:** The Good Shepherd calls you by name. Ask for an attentive ear to listen to his voice in everyday life.

**Act:** Pay attention to learn or remember the names of acquaintances. Call them by name, and treat them as what they are: sons and daughters of God, your brothers and sisters, sheep of the same fold.

## The raising of Lazarus

**11** <sup>1</sup>There was a sick man named Lazarus who was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>This is the same Mary, who anointed the *Lord* with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair. Her brother Lazarus was sick.

<sup>3</sup>So the sisters sent this message to Jesus, “*Lord*, the one you love is sick.” <sup>4</sup>On hearing this, Jesus said, “This illness will not end in death; rather it is for God’s glory and the Son of God will be glorified through it.”

<sup>5</sup>It is a fact that Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus; <sup>6</sup>yet, after he heard of the illness of Lazarus, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. <sup>7</sup>Only then did he say to his disciples, “Let us go into Judea again.” <sup>8</sup>They replied, “Master, recently the Jews wanted to stone you. Are you going there again?”

<sup>9</sup>Jesus said to them, “Are not twelve working hours needed to complete a day? Those who walk in the daytime shall not stumble, for they see the light of this world. <sup>10</sup>But those who walk at night stumble, for there is no light in them.”

<sup>11</sup>After that, Jesus said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going to wake him up.” <sup>12</sup>The disciples replied, “*Lord*, a sick person who sleeps will recover.” <sup>13</sup>But Jesus had referred to Lazarus’ death, while they thought that he had meant the repose of sleep. <sup>14</sup>So Jesus said plainly, “Lazarus is dead; <sup>15</sup>and for your sake, I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” <sup>16</sup>Then Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

<sup>17</sup>When Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days. <sup>18</sup>As Bethany is near Jerusalem, about two miles away, <sup>19</sup>many Jews had come to Martha and Mary after the death of their brother to comfort them.

<sup>20</sup>When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him while Mary remained sitting in the house. <sup>21</sup>Martha said to Jesus, “If you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup>But I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” <sup>23</sup>Jesus said, “Your brother will rise again.”

<sup>24</sup>Martha replied, “I know that he will rise in the resurrection, at the last day.” <sup>25</sup>But Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection. Whoever

believes in me, though he dies, shall live. <sup>26</sup>Whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

<sup>27</sup>Martha then answered, “Yes, *Lord*, I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world.”

<sup>28</sup>After that, Martha went and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, “The Master is here and is calling for you.” <sup>29</sup>As soon as Mary heard this, she rose and went to him. <sup>30</sup>Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him.

<sup>31</sup>The Jews, who were with Mary in the house consoling her, also came. When they saw her get up and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep.

<sup>32</sup>When Mary came to the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “*Lord*, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” <sup>33</sup>When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping, who had come with her, he was moved to the depths of his spirit and troubled. <sup>34</sup>Then he asked, “Where have you laid him?” They answered, “*Lord*, come and see.” <sup>35</sup>Jesus wept.

<sup>36</sup>The Jews said, “See how he loved him!” <sup>37</sup>But some of them said, “If he could open the eyes of the blind man, could he not have kept this man from dying?”

<sup>38</sup>Jesus, again deeply moved, drew near to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. <sup>39</sup>Jesus said, “Take the stone away.” Martha said to him, “*Lord*, by now he will smell, for this is the fourth day.” <sup>40</sup>Jesus replied, “Have I not told you that, if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” <sup>41</sup>So they removed the stone.

Jesus raised his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you for you have heard me. <sup>42</sup>I knew that you hear me always, but my prayer was for the sake of these people that they may believe that you sent me.” <sup>43</sup>When Jesus had said this, he cried out in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”

<sup>44</sup>The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Untie him, and let him go.”

### JOHN 11:1-44

**Read:** Jesus resurrects his friend Lazarus, gives him life, and conquers death. This is his last “sign” in the Gospel, and before

it, there are two opposing reactions: faith and disbelief. Faith opens the doors of life; disbelief closes them.

**Reflect:** What does resurrection mean to you? Do you hope in it? What do you think about Jesus' relationship with Lazarus and his sisters? Does it depict the profound humanity of Jesus?

**Pray:** Ask every night for the grace of a happy death and a deep faith in the resurrection. Also, ask the intercession of those who have preceded you in faith: the saints, family, and friends.

**Act:** Read this passage again and try to learn more about the Church's teaching on the resurrection of the body.

## The plot to kill Jesus

<sup>45</sup>Many of the Jews who had come with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw what he did; <sup>46</sup>but some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. <sup>47</sup>So the chief priests and the Pharisees called together the Council.

They said, "What are we to do? For this man keeps on performing many miraculous signs. <sup>48</sup>If we let him go on like this, all the people will believe in him and, as a result of this, the Romans will come and destroy our Holy Place and our nation."

<sup>49</sup>Then one of them, Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! <sup>50</sup>It is better to have one man die for the people than to let the whole nation be destroyed."

<sup>51</sup>In saying this Caiaphas did not speak for himself, but being High Priest that year, he foretold like a prophet that Jesus would die for the nation <sup>52</sup>and not for the nation only but also would die in order to gather into one the scattered children of God. <sup>53</sup>So, from that day on, they were determined to kill him.

<sup>54</sup>Because of this, Jesus no longer moved about freely among the Jews. He withdrew instead to the country near the wilderness and stayed with his disciples in a town called Ephraim.

<sup>55</sup>The Passover of the Jews was at hand and people from everywhere were coming to Jerusalem to purify themselves before the Passover.

<sup>56</sup>They looked for Jesus and as they stood in the temple, they talked

with one another, “What do you think? Will he come to the festival?”<sup>57</sup> Meanwhile, the chief priests and the elders had given orders that anyone who knew where he was should let them know so that they could arrest him.

### JOHN 11:45-57

**Read:** The raising of Lazarus brings the opponents of Jesus to a final decision. They are worried that people will believe in Jesus and the Romans will come and destroy them. Caiaphas speaks of the solution: Jesus must die. Jesus withdraws from public life to a country town while the officials look for an opportunity to arrest him.

**Reflect:** The officials seem more interested in protecting their own position and privileges than to accept the liberating message of Jesus. Does this still happen today? How? Jesus does die for the sake of the people. Have some followers of Jesus done the same thing as Jesus?

**Pray:** Believers should strive more for others than for themselves. Pray for sincerity and humility to accept your own life, and the necessary strength to care for the common good, the good of others.

**Act:** Stand up against corrupt religious and civil leaders who are interested only in protecting and maintaining their own power.

## The supper at Bethany

(Mt 26:6; Mk 14:3)

**12**<sup>1</sup> Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where he had raised Lazarus, the dead man, to life. <sup>2</sup> Now they gave a dinner for him and while Martha waited on them, Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus.

<sup>3</sup> Then Mary took a pound of costly perfume made from genuine spike-nard and anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair. And the whole house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

<sup>4</sup> Judas Iscariot—the disciple who was to betray Jesus—remarked, <sup>5</sup> “This perfume could have been sold for three hundred silver coins and

the money given to the poor.”<sup>6</sup> Judas, indeed, had no concern for the poor; he was a thief and as he held the common purse, he used to help himself to the funds.

<sup>7</sup>But Jesus spoke up, “Leave her alone. Was she not keeping it for the day of my burial?”<sup>8</sup> (The poor you always have with you, but you will not always have me.)”

<sup>9</sup>Many Jews heard that Jesus was there and they came, not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>10</sup>So the chief priests thought about killing Lazarus as well, <sup>11</sup>for many of the Jews were drifting away because of him and believing in Jesus.

### **The Messiah enters Jerusalem**

(Mt 21:5; Mk 11:1)

<sup>12</sup>The next day, many people who had come for the festival heard that Jesus was to enter Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup>So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him. And they cried out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!”

<sup>14</sup>Jesus found a donkey and sat upon it, as Scripture says: <sup>15</sup>*Do not fear, city of Zion! See, your king is coming, sitting on the colt of a donkey!*

<sup>16</sup>The disciples were not aware of this at first, but after Jesus was glorified, they realized that this had been written about him and that this was what had happened to him.

<sup>17</sup>The people who came with him bore witness and told how he had called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead. <sup>18</sup>It was because of this miraculous sign, which Jesus had given, that so many people welcomed him. <sup>19</sup>In the meantime, the Pharisees said to one another, “We are getting nowhere; the whole world has gone after him.”

### **Unless the grain dies**

<sup>20</sup>There were some Greeks who had come up to Jerusalem to worship during the feast. <sup>21</sup>They approached Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” <sup>22</sup>Philip went to Andrew and the two of them told Jesus.

<sup>23</sup>Then Jesus said, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Truly, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.

<sup>25</sup>Those who love their life destroy it and those who despise their life in this world save it even to everlasting life.

<sup>26</sup>Whoever wants to serve me, let him follow me; and wherever I am, there shall my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

<sup>27</sup>Now my soul is in distress. Shall I say, ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But, to face all this, I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup>Father, glorify your name!” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”

<sup>29</sup>People standing there heard something and said it was thunder; but others said, “An angel was speaking to him.” <sup>30</sup>Then Jesus declared, “This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. <sup>31</sup>Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be cast down. <sup>32</sup>And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup>With these words, Jesus referred to the kind of death he was to die.

<sup>34</sup>The crowd answered him, “We have been told in the law that the Messiah stands forever. How can you say that the Son of Man shall be lifted up? What kind of Son of Man is that?”

<sup>35</sup>Jesus said to them, “The light will be with you a little longer. Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtakes you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. <sup>36</sup>While you have the light, believe in the light and become children of light.”

After Jesus had said this, he withdrew and kept himself hidden.

## **The unbelief of the Jews**

<sup>37</sup>Even though Jesus had done so many miraculous signs among them, they didn’t believe in him. <sup>38</sup>Indeed the words spoken by the prophet Isaiah had to be fulfilled: *Lord, who has believed what we proclaimed? To whom have the ways of God the Savior been made known?*

<sup>39</sup>They could not believe. Isaiah had said elsewhere: <sup>40</sup>*He let their eyes become blind and their hearts hard, so that they could neither see nor understand, nor be converted—otherwise, I would have healed them.*

<sup>41</sup>Isaiah said this when he saw his glory and his words refer to him.

<sup>42</sup>Many of them, however, believed in Jesus, even among the rulers, but they did not acknowledge him because of the Pharisees, lest they be put out of the Jewish community. <sup>43</sup>They preferred the favorable opinion of people, rather than God’s approval.

<sup>44</sup>Yet Jesus had said and even cried out, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me, but in him who sent me. <sup>45</sup>And whoever sees me, sees him who sent me. <sup>46</sup>I have come into the world as light so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.

<sup>47</sup>If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I am not the one to condemn him; for I have come, not to condemn the world, but to save the world. <sup>48</sup>The one who rejects me and does not receive my words already has a judge: the very words I have spoken will condemn him on the last day.

<sup>49</sup>For I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father, who sent me, has instructed me what to say and how to speak. <sup>50</sup>I know that his commandment is eternal life and that is why the message I give, I give as the Father instructed me.”

### JOHN 12:1-50

**Read:** This chapter bridges the gap between the “book of signs (2–12) and the “book of passion or glory” (13–21). It highlights the following idea: in the following of Jesus, surrender (death) is the way to life. “If the grain of fallen wheat does not die, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”

**Reflect:** Why is Judas so worried? Do you think that Christians care much about money rather than the announcement of the kingdom? Why? Is Jesus the human face of God for you? Why should the grain of wheat die? How does shed light on the death of Jesus? What is the relationship between dying to ourselves and giving life to others?

**Pray:** Pray that you learn to distinguish what is important from what is secondary. Ask the Lord for the grace to have a generous heart to serve and surrender (to die) to Christ and the brethren in your daily life.

**Act:** Trust in Jesus at all time, even in the face of adversity, and listen to and answer his call to serve him in those who approach you and ask for help.

SECOND PART:  
JESUS COMPLETES HIS WORK

**13**<sup>1</sup>It was before the feast of the Passover. Jesus realized that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father; and as he had loved those who were his own in the world, he would love them with perfect love.

**Jesus washes his disciples' feet**

<sup>2</sup>They were at supper and the devil had already put into the mind of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray him. <sup>3</sup>Jesus knew that the Father had entrusted all things to him and as he had come from God, he was going to God. <sup>4</sup>So he got up from the table, removed his garment and taking a towel, wrapped it around his waist. <sup>5</sup>Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing.

<sup>6</sup>When he came to Simon Peter, Simon asked him, "Why, *Lord*, do you want to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup>Jesus said, "What I am doing you cannot understand now, but afterward you will understand it." <sup>8</sup>Peter replied, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you can have no part with me." <sup>9</sup>Then Simon Peter said, "*Lord*, wash not only my feet but also my hands and my head!"

<sup>10</sup>Jesus replied, "Whoever has taken a bath does not need to wash (except the feet), for he is clean all over. You are clean, though not all of you." <sup>11</sup>Jesus knew who was to betray him; because of this he said, "Not all of you are clean."

<sup>12</sup>When Jesus had finished washing their feet, he put on his garment again, went back to the table and said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup>You call me *Master* and *Lord*, and you are right, for so I am. <sup>14</sup>If I, then, your *Lord* and *Master*, have washed your feet, you also must wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup>I have given you an example, that as I have done, you also may do.

<sup>16</sup>Truly, I say to you, the servant is not greater than his master, nor is the messenger greater than he who sent him. <sup>17</sup>Understand this, and blessed are you, if you put it into practice.

<sup>18</sup>I am not speaking of you all, because I know the ones I have chosen and the Scripture has to be fulfilled which says: The one who shares my

table will rise up against me. <sup>19</sup>I tell you this now before it happens, so that when it does happen, you may know that I am He.

<sup>20</sup>Truly, I say to you, whoever welcomes the one I send, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the One who sent me.”

<sup>21</sup>After saying this, Jesus was distressed in spirit, and said plainly, “Truly, one of you will betray me.” <sup>22</sup>The disciples then looked at one another, wondering whom he meant. <sup>23</sup>One of the disciples, the one Jesus loved, was reclining near Jesus; <sup>24</sup>so Simon Peter signaled him to ask Jesus whom he meant.

<sup>25</sup>And the disciple, who was reclining near Jesus, asked him, “Lord, who is it?” <sup>26</sup>Jesus answered, “I shall dip a piece of bread in the dish and he to whom I give it, is the one.”

So Jesus dipped the bread in the dish and gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. <sup>27</sup>As Judas took the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus then said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.”

<sup>28</sup>None of the others reclining at the table understood why Jesus had said this to Judas. <sup>29</sup>As Judas had the common purse, they may have thought that Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the feast,” or, “Give something to the poor.” <sup>30</sup>Judas left as soon as he had eaten the bread. It was night.

<sup>31</sup>When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. <sup>32</sup>God will glorify him, and he will glorify him very soon.

<sup>33</sup>My children, I am with you for only a little while; you will look for me, but as I already told the Jews, now I tell you: where I am going you cannot come. <sup>34</sup>I give you a new commandment: Love one another! Just as I have loved you, you also must love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

<sup>36</sup>Simon Peter said to him, “*Lord*, where are you going?” Jesus answered, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but afterward you will.” <sup>37</sup>Peter said, “*Lord*, why can’t I follow you now? I am ready to give my life for you.” <sup>38</sup>“To give your life for me?” Jesus asked Peter. “Truly I tell you, the cock will not crow before you have denied me three times.”

**JOHN 13:1-38**

**Read:** Jesus loves his own to the end of his life and to the end of the possibility of love. He washes their feet and tells them that unless they do the same, in a gesture of service, they have nothing to do with him. With the announcement of the betrayal of Judas and the cowardice of Peter the time of darkness begins.

**Reflect:** How great is the love of Jesus to his disciples? Does washing of the feet mean something in our contemporary culture? What does Jesus invite us to do? How do we make the commandment of love a reality in our daily life? What does darkness mean in the Gospel?

**Pray:** Ask the Lord the grace to persevere in the faith. Pray for all those who once believed and have abandoned belief, that with the example of Christians they may feel invited to come back again.

**Act:** Perform some humble service or favor for another, especially someone who is dear to you.

**I'm going to the Father**

**14**<sup>1</sup>“Do not be troubled! Trust in God and trust in me! <sup>2</sup>In my Father’s house there are many rooms; otherwise, I would not have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>After I have gone and prepared a place for you, I shall come again and take you to me, so that where I am, you also may be. <sup>4</sup>Yet you know the way where I am going.”

<sup>5</sup>Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going; how can we know the way?” <sup>6</sup>Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me. <sup>7</sup>If you know me, you will know the Father also; indeed you know him and you have seen him.”

<sup>8</sup>Philip asked him, “Lord, show us the Father and that is enough.” <sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, “What! I have been with you so long and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever sees me sees the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup>Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?”

All that I say to you, I do not say of myself. The Father who dwells in me is doing his own work. <sup>11</sup>Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; at least believe it on the evidence of these works that I do.

<sup>12</sup>Truly, I say to you, the one who believes in me will do the same works that I do; and he will even do greater than these, for I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup>Everything you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>Indeed, anything you ask, calling upon my name, I will do it.

<sup>15</sup>If you love me, you will keep my commandments; <sup>16</sup>and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you forever, <sup>17</sup>the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he is with you and will be in you.

<sup>18</sup>I will not leave you orphans, I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup>A little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me because I live and you will also live. <sup>20</sup>On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you.

<sup>21</sup>Whoever keeps my commandments is the one who loves me. If he loves me, he will also be loved by my Father; I too shall love him and show myself clearly to him."

<sup>22</sup>Judas—not Judas Iscariot—asked Jesus, "Lord, how can it be that you will show yourself clearly to us and not to the world?" <sup>23</sup>Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word and my Father will love him; and we will come to him and live with him. <sup>24</sup>But if anyone does not love me, he will not keep my words; and these words that you hear are not mine, but the Father's who sent me.

<sup>25</sup>I told you all this while I am still with you. <sup>26</sup>From now on the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of all that I have told you.

<sup>27</sup>Peace be with you! My peace I give to you; not as the world gives peace do I give it to you. Do not be troubled! Do not be afraid! <sup>28</sup>You heard me say, 'I am going away, but I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I go to the Father for the Father is greater than I.

<sup>29</sup>I have told you this now before it takes place, so that when it does happen you may believe. <sup>30</sup>There is very little left for me to tell you for

the prince of this world is at hand, although there is nothing in me that he can claim. <sup>31</sup>But see, the world must know that I love the Father and that I do what the Father has taught me to do. Come now, let us go.

### JOHN 14:1-31

**Read:** Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Nobody goes to the Father unless through him. Jesus announces that his hour has come, the hour of his passion, but also promises the coming of the advocate, the Holy Spirit.

**Reflect:** Why is the crucifixion a sign of God's power and goodness? Is God present in every death, even in that which is cruel and painful? "Advocate" means "defender." Do you think of the Holy Spirit as your "advocate"?

**Pray:** Ask the Holy Spirit to accompany you at all times and to assist you in particular in difficulties or decision-making situations.

**Act:** The Holy Spirit leads everyone to the fullness of truth. Encourage those around you to find truth by listening to the Holy Spirit.

## The vine and the branches

**15**<sup>1</sup>I am the true vine and my Father is the vine grower. <sup>2</sup>If any of my branches doesn't *bear fruit*, he breaks it off; and he prunes every branch that does *bear fruit*, that it may bear even *more fruit*.

<sup>3</sup>You are already made clean by the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Live in me as I live in you. The branch cannot *bear fruit* by itself, but has to remain part of the vine; so neither can you if you don't remain in me.

<sup>5</sup>I am the vine and you are the branches. As long as you remain in me and I in you, you *bear much fruit*; but apart from me, you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>Whoever does not remain in me is thrown away as they do with branches and they wither. Then they are gathered and thrown into the fire and burned.

<sup>7</sup>If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask whatever you want and it will be given to you. <sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified when you *bear much fruit*: it is then that you become my disciples.

<sup>9</sup>As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love! <sup>10</sup>You will remain in my love if you keep my commandments, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

<sup>11</sup>I have told you all this that my own joy may be in you, and your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup>This is my commandment: Love one another as I have loved you! <sup>13</sup>There is no greater love than this, to give one's life for one's friends; <sup>14</sup>and you are my friends if you do what I command you.

<sup>15</sup>I shall not call you servants anymore, because servants do not know what their master is about. Instead, I have called you friends, since I have made known to you everything I learned from my Father.

<sup>16</sup>You did not choose me; it was I who chose you and sent you to go and *bear fruit*, fruit that will last. And everything you ask the Father in my name, he will give you.

<sup>17</sup>This is my command, that you love one another.

## The hostile world

<sup>18</sup>If the world *hates* you, remember that the world *hated* me before you. <sup>19</sup>This would not be so if you belonged to the world because the world loves its own. But you are not of the world since I have chosen you from the world; because of this, the world *hates* you.

<sup>20</sup>Remember what I told you: the servant is not greater than his master; if they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will keep yours as well. <sup>21</sup>All this they will do to you on account of my name because they do not know the One who sent me.

<sup>22</sup>If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. <sup>23</sup>Those who *hate* me *hate* my Father.

<sup>24</sup>If I had not done among them what no one else has ever done, they would have no sin. But after they have seen all this, they hate me and my Father <sup>25</sup>and the words written in their law become true: *They hated me for no reason.*

### JOHN 15:1-25

**Read:** This chapter stresses the connections created by love. Using the image of a grape vine, disciples must remain with

Jesus and bear much fruit and must take care of each other. They are friends of Jesus and they are friends to each other. They will have problems in the world, but they have the promise of the Holy Spirit who will defend them at all times.

**Reflect:** The disciples are called to love each other, to love the members of the community. How do you put into practice this commandment? How should it be done within the parish community?

**Pray:** Pray for the ability to be sensitive to those members of your community who need your help.

**Act:** Be a volunteer in any ministry in your parish that is serving the poorest ones and invite somebody from your family to come along with you.

### The Spirit will come

<sup>26</sup>From the Father, I will send you the Spirit of truth. When this Helper has come from the Father, he will be my witness <sup>27</sup>and you, too, will be my witnesses, for you have been with me from the beginning.

**16**<sup>1</sup>I tell you all this to keep you from stumbling and falling away. <sup>2</sup>They will put you out of the synagogue. Still more, the hour is coming when anyone who kills you will claim to be serving God; <sup>3</sup>they will do this because they have not known the Father or me. <sup>4</sup>I tell you all these things now so that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you about them.

I did not tell you about this in the beginning because I was with you. <sup>5</sup>But now I am going to the One who sent me and none of you asks me where I am going; <sup>6</sup>instead you are overcome with grief, because of what I have said.

<sup>7</sup>Believe me, it is better for you that I go away because as long as I do not go away the Helper will not come to you. But if I go away, I will send him to you <sup>8</sup>and when he comes he will vindicate the truth before a sinful world; and he will vindicate the paths of righteousness and justice.

<sup>9</sup>What is the world's sin in regard to me? Disbelief. <sup>10</sup>What is the path of righteousness? It is the path I walk by which I go to the Father, and

you shall see me no more. <sup>11</sup>What is the path of justice? It is the path on which the prince of this world will always stand condemned.

<sup>12</sup>I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now.

<sup>13</sup>When he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into the whole truth.

For he will not speak of his own authority but will speak of what he hears, and he will tell you about the things which are to come. <sup>14</sup>He will take what is mine and make it known to you; in doing this he will glorify me. <sup>15</sup>All that the Father has is mine; for this reason, I told you that the Spirit will take what is mine and make it known to you.

### **The promise of a new presence**

<sup>16</sup>A little while and you will see me no more; and then a little while and you will see me.”

<sup>17</sup>Some of the disciples wondered, “What does he mean by, ‘A little while and you will not see me; and then a little while and you will see me’? And why did he say, ‘I go to the Father’?” <sup>18</sup>And they said to one another, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We don’t understand.”

<sup>19</sup>Jesus knew that they wanted to question him; so he said to them, “You are puzzled because I told you that in a little while you will see me no more and then a little while later you will see me.

<sup>20</sup>Truly, I say to you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy. <sup>21</sup>A woman in childbirth is in distress because her time is at hand. But after the child is born, she no longer remembers her suffering because of her great joy: a human being is born into the world.

<sup>22</sup>You feel sorrowful now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice; and no one will take your joy from you. <sup>23</sup>When that day comes you will not ask me anything. Truly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you. <sup>24</sup>So far you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and receive, that your joy may be full.

<sup>25</sup>I have taught you all these things in veiled language, but the time is coming when I shall no longer speak in veiled language but will speak to you plainly about the Father.

<sup>26</sup>When that day comes, you will ask in my name; and it will not be necessary for me to ask the Father for you, <sup>27</sup>for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and you believed that I came from the

Father. <sup>28</sup>As I came from the Father and have come into the world, so I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

<sup>29</sup>The disciples said to him, “Now you are speaking plainly and not in veiled language! <sup>30</sup>Now we see that you know all things even before we question you. Because of this, we believe that you came from God.”

<sup>31</sup>Jesus answered them, “You say that you believe? <sup>32</sup>The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.

<sup>33</sup>I have told you all this, so that in me you may have peace. You will have trouble in the world, but courage! I have overcome the world.”

### JOHN 15:26—16:33

**Read:** The disciples will suffer persecution. The Advocate, the Helper, will speak the truth to the world regarding sin, justice, and condemnation. He will speak the truth with authority. The disciples will experience sadness, but their sadness will become joy. Jesus will return to the Father, but he will never abandon them. As he has conquered the world, the disciples will always have reason to be joyful.

**Reflect:** How does the Holy Spirit speak to the world regarding sin, justice, and condemnation today? Does the Holy Spirit speak to you? Do you listen to the Holy Spirit? Can you overcome the world with your good deeds? Do you have peace in your heart?

**Pray:** When you have problems, or feel down for the bad things happening to you, remember in your prayer the blessings you have received and thank God for them.

**Act:** Speak to someone about the Holy Spirit and explain what the Holy Spirit means to you.

### Prayer of Jesus for the new holy people

**17**<sup>1</sup>After saying this, Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come! Give glory to your Son that the Son may give glory to you. <sup>2</sup>You have given him power over all humanity,

so that he may give eternal life to all those you entrusted to him. <sup>3</sup>For this is eternal life: to *know* you the only true God and the One you sent, Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I have glorified you on earth and finished the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup>Now, Father, give me in your presence the same glory I had with you before the world began.

<sup>6</sup>I have made your name known to those you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me and they kept your word. <sup>7</sup>And now they know that whatever you entrusted to me, is indeed from you. <sup>8</sup>I have given them the teaching I received from you and they accepted it and know in truth that I came from you, and they believe that you sent me.

<sup>9</sup>I pray for them. I do not pray for the world, but for those who belong to you and whom you have given to me. <sup>10</sup>Indeed, all I have is yours and all you have is mine; and now they are my glory. <sup>11</sup>I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I come to you. Holy Father, keep those you have given me in your name, so that they may be one as we also are.

<sup>12</sup>When I was with them, I kept them safe in your name; and not one was lost, except the one who was already lost and in this the Scripture was fulfilled. <sup>13</sup>And now I come to you; in the world I speak these things, so that those whom you gave me might have joy—all my joy within themselves.

<sup>14</sup>I have given them your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>15</sup>I do not ask you to remove them from the world, but to keep them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup>Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth.

<sup>18</sup>I have sent them into the world as you sent me into the world; <sup>19</sup>and for their sake, I go to the sacrifice by which I am consecrated, so that they too may be consecrated in truth.

<sup>20</sup>I pray not only for these but also for those who through their word will believe in me. <sup>21</sup>May they all be one as you, Father are in me and I am in you. May they be one in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

<sup>22</sup>I have given them the glory you have given me, that they may be one as we are one: <sup>23</sup>I in them and you in me. Thus, they shall reach

perfection in unity; and the world shall know that you have sent me and that I have loved them just as you loved me.

<sup>24</sup>Father, since you have given them to me, I want them to be with me where I am and see the glory you gave me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world.

<sup>25</sup>Righteous Father, the world has not *known* you, but I have *known* you, and these have *known* that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup>As I revealed your name to them, so will I continue to reveal it so that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I also may be in them.”

### JOHN 17:1-26

**Read:** This priestly prayer of Jesus applies to all believers. Eternal life, life with God, begins now with Jesus. Jesus reveals his Father to his followers and asks the Father to protect them and love them. Jesus sends them into the world even as the Father sent Jesus. Jesus prays that the love with which God loved him, may also be in his followers. Thus, he completed his mission. His followers must do the same and seek holiness.

**Reflect:** The follower is sanctified in the truth and has the mission of helping others to sanctify themselves. What does holiness mean to you? Are you holy? Jesus manifests the love of God to the whole world. His disciples continue his mission. How do you live the mission of Jesus?

**Pray:** Holiness is being close to God. Pray often. Use the prayer of Jesus: “Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me.”

**Act:** At night, before sleeping, may your last words be the prayer of Jesus.

## The arrest of Jesus

**18**<sup>1</sup>When Jesus had finished speaking, he went with his disciples to the other side of the Kidron Valley. There was a garden there, which Jesus entered with his disciples.

<sup>2</sup>Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place since Jesus had often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup>So Judas took soldiers and some servants from the chief priests and Pharisees and they went to the garden with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus knew all that was going to happen to him; he stepped forward and asked, “Who are you looking for?” <sup>5</sup> They answered, “Jesus the Nazarene.” Jesus said, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, stood there with them.

<sup>6</sup> When Jesus said, “I am he,” they moved backwards and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup> He then asked a second time, “Who are you looking for?” and they answered, “Jesus the Nazarene.” <sup>8</sup> Jesus replied, “I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, let these others go.” <sup>9</sup> So what Jesus had said came true: “I have not lost one of those you gave me.”

<sup>10</sup> Simon Peter had a sword; he drew it and struck Malchus, the High Priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. <sup>11</sup> But Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into its sheath! Shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?”

<sup>12</sup> The guards and the soldiers, with their commander, seized Jesus and bound him; <sup>13</sup> and they took him first to Annas. Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was the High Priest that year; <sup>14</sup> and it was Caiaphas who had told the Jews, “It is better that one man should die for the people.”

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the High Priest, they let him enter the courtyard of the High Priest along with Jesus, <sup>16</sup> but Peter had to stay outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the High Priest, went out and spoke to the maidservant at the gate and brought Peter in. <sup>17</sup> Then, this maidservant on duty at the door said to Peter, “So you also are one of his disciples?” But he answered, “I am not.”

<sup>18</sup> Now the servants and the guards had made a charcoal fire and were standing and warming themselves because it was cold. Peter was also with them warming himself.

<sup>19</sup> The High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. <sup>20</sup> Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in places where the Jews meet together, either at the assemblies in synagogues or in the temple. I did not teach secretly. <sup>21</sup> Why then do you question me? Ask those who heard me, they know what I said.”

<sup>22</sup> At this reply one of the guards standing there gave Jesus a blow on the face, saying, “Is that the way to answer the High Priest?” <sup>23</sup> Jesus

said to him, “If I have said something wrong, point it out. But if I spoke correctly, why strike me?”

<sup>24</sup>Then Annas sent him, bound, to Caiaphas, the High Priest.

<sup>25</sup>Now Simon Peter stood there warming himself. They said to him, “Surely you also are one of his disciples.” He denied it, and answered, “I am not!” <sup>26</sup>One of the High Priest’s servants, a kinsman of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you with him in the garden?” <sup>27</sup>Again Peter denied it, and at once the cock crowed.

### JOHN 18:1-27

**Read:** Even when arrested, Jesus seems to be in control of the situation at all times. His answer, “I am,” causes the fall of his pursuers and even Annas does not know how to answer the assertive words of Jesus. While Jesus asserts himself even when abused, Peter lies and betrays Jesus and himself.

**Reflect:** Jesus cares for his disciples and acts with authority. Peter is weak. The rock becomes a pebble. Love and commitment demand perseverance, renewal, and care. How do you renew and care for your faith, love, and hope in the Lord?

**Pray:** The temptation can be strong. Sometimes the concern for the preservation of life itself can overcome commitment. Pray for your perseverance in the midst of problems.

**Act:** Jesus has conquered the world. When you find yourself in a difficult situation or in a situation that you cannot control, follow the example of freedom of Jesus and take the correct decision or position, even if it is unpopular.

### Jesus before Pilate

<sup>28</sup>Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the headquarters of the Roman governor. It was now morning. The Jews didn’t go inside, lest they be made unclean by entering the house of a pagan and therefore not allowed to eat the Passover meal. <sup>29</sup>So Pilate came outside and asked, “What charge do you bring against this man?”

<sup>30</sup>They answered, “If he were not a criminal, we would not be handing him over to you.” <sup>31</sup>Pilate said, “Take him yourselves and judge him

according to your own law.” But they replied, “We ourselves are not allowed to put anyone to death.”

<sup>32</sup>According to what Jesus himself had foretold, it was clear what kind of death he would die.

<sup>33</sup>Pilate then entered the court again, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” <sup>34</sup>Jesus replied, “Are you saying this on your own initiative; or have others told you about me?”

<sup>35</sup>Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?” <sup>36</sup>Jesus answered, “My kingship does not come from this world. If I were a king like those of this world, my servants would have fought to save me from being handed over to the Jews. But my kingship is not of this world.”

<sup>37</sup>Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” And Jesus answered, “Just as you say, I am a king. For this, I was born and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is on the side of truth hears my voice.” <sup>38</sup>Pilate said, “What is truth?”

Pilate then went out to the Jews again and said, “I find no crime in this man. <sup>39</sup>Now, according to custom, I must release a prisoner to you at the Passover. With your agreement, I will release to you the King of the Jews.” <sup>40</sup>But they insisted and cried out, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a robber.

**19**<sup>1</sup>Then Pilate had Jesus taken away and scourged. <sup>2</sup>The soldiers twisted thorns into a crown and put it on his head. They threw a cloak of royal purple around his shoulders; <sup>3</sup>and they began coming up to him and saluting him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and they struck him on the face.

<sup>4</sup>Pilate went outside yet another time and said to the Jews, “Look, I am bringing him out and I want you to know that I find no crime in him.”

<sup>5</sup>Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak, and Pilate pointed at him, saying, “Behold the man!”

<sup>6</sup>On seeing him the chief priests and the guards cried out, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate said, “Take him yourselves and have him crucified for I find no case against him.” <sup>7</sup>The Jews then said, “We have a law, and according to the law this man must die because he made himself Son of God.”

<sup>8</sup>When Pilate heard this he was more afraid. <sup>9</sup>And coming back into

the court he asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup>Then Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, just as I have power to crucify you?” <sup>11</sup>Jesus replied, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given to you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is more guilty.”

<sup>12</sup>From that moment Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who makes himself a king is defying Caesar.”

<sup>13</sup>When Pilate heard this, he had Jesus brought outside to the place called the Stone Floor—in Hebrew Gabbatha—and sat down in the judgment seat. <sup>14</sup>It was the day of preparation for the Passover, about noon. Pilate said to the Jews, “Behold your king!” <sup>15</sup>But they cried out, “Away! Take him away! Crucify him!” Pilate replied, “Shall I crucify your king?” And the chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!”

<sup>16</sup>Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

### JOHN 18:28—19:16a

**Read:** The trial by Pilate has seven scenes. Pilate continues to go in and out of the praetorium speaking to Jesus and to the Jews. He does not want to crucify Jesus but is weak and tries to placate the crowds. He seems curious about who Jesus is; it is just curiosity and so he does not understand him.

**Reflect:** Who is really on trial, Pilate or Jesus? This Gospel seems to assume that Jesus is the judge, Pilate is the witness to Jesus’ innocence and the crowd is the criminal seeking to put to death the innocent. In the end, Pilate gives into the crowd’s demands. Who is responsible for the death of Jesus?

**Pray:** Pray for persons who, like Jesus, are victims of injustice, the mishandling of power, envy. Ask that these people’s faces and words may question us as Christians.

**Act:** Avoid any slight judgment on others, and check your prejudices, especially if they are prejudices against prisoners or marginalized people.

## Jesus is crucified

They took Jesus and led him away. <sup>17</sup>Bearing his cross, Jesus went out of the city to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew Golgotha. <sup>18</sup>There he was crucified and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus in the middle.

<sup>19</sup>Pilate had a notice written and fastened to the cross, which read: *Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews.* <sup>20</sup>Many Jewish people saw this title because the place where Jesus was crucified was very close to the city; and the title was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. <sup>21</sup>The chief priests said to Pilate, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews’ but, ‘This man claimed to be King of the Jews.’” <sup>22</sup>Pilate answered them, “What I have written, I have written.”

<sup>23</sup>When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each of them. But as the tunic was woven in one piece from top to bottom, <sup>24</sup>they said, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots to decide who will get it.” This fulfilled the words of Scripture: *They divided my clothing among them; they cast lots for my garment. This was what the soldiers did.*

## Jesus' last words

<sup>25</sup>Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary, who was the wife of Cleophas, and Mary of Magdala. <sup>26</sup>When Jesus saw the mother and the disciple whom he loved, he said to the mother, “Woman, this is your son.” <sup>27</sup>Then he said to the disciple, “This is your mother.” And from that moment the disciple took her to his own home.

<sup>28</sup>Jesus knew all was now finished and, in order to fulfill what was written in Scripture, he said, I am thirsty. <sup>29</sup>A jar full of bitter wine stood there; so, putting a sponge soaked in the wine on a twig of hyssop, they raised it to his lips. <sup>30</sup>Jesus took the wine and said, “It is accomplished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up the spirit.

## The pierced Christ

<sup>31</sup>As it was Preparation Day, the Jews did not want the bodies to remain on the cross during the Sabbath, for this Sabbath was a very solemn day. They asked Pilate to have the legs of the condemned men broken so that the bodies might be taken away.

<sup>32</sup>The soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and of the

other man, who had been crucified with Jesus. <sup>33</sup>When they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup>One of the soldiers, however, pierced his side with a lance and immediately there came out blood and water.

<sup>35</sup>The one who saw that has testified to it and his testimony is true; he knows he speaks the truth so that you also might believe. <sup>36</sup>All this happened to fulfill the words of Scripture: *Not one of his bones shall be broken.* <sup>37</sup>Another text says: *They shall look on him whom they have pierced.*

<sup>38</sup>After this, Joseph of Arimathea approached Pilate for he was a disciple of Jesus, though secretly, for fear of the Jews. And he asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate agreed; so he came and took away the body.

<sup>39</sup>Nicodemus, the man who first visited Jesus by night, also came and brought a jar of myrrh mixed with aloes, about seventy-five pounds. <sup>40</sup>They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices, following the burial customs of the Jews.

<sup>41</sup>There was a garden in the place where Jesus had been crucified and, in the garden, a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup>And therefore, because the sepulcher was nearby, and the Jewish day of preparation was coming to a close, they placed the body of Jesus there.

### JOHN 19:16b-42

**Read:** Romans crucify Jesus. On the cross, he delivers the beloved disciple to his mother, and her mother to the beloved disciple. Before he dies, he bows his head and hands over his Spirit. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus bury his body.

**Reflect:** What does the death of Jesus mean? Some hold that when Jesus gives up his Spirit, the Church is born of water from his body and the Spirit he shares with God. What do you think? Why was Nicodemus there? Did he come to be a believer?

**Pray:** The Church filled with the Spirit continues the mission of Jesus. Pray for the Church leaders that with their life and preaching they may promote the mission of Jesus: the kingdom of God. Pray that the people who are the Church live the love of Christ in the world.

**Act:** Faith and holiness manifest in what we do for others. Express your faith in action in favor of a person you do not know.

## The Lord is risen

**20**<sup>1</sup>Now, on the first day after the Sabbath, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning while it was still dark and she saw that the stone blocking the tomb had been moved away. <sup>2</sup>She ran to Peter, and the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and she said to them, “They have taken the *Lord* out of the tomb and we don’t know where they have laid him.”

<sup>3</sup>Peter then set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. <sup>4</sup>They ran together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup>He bent down and saw the linen cloths lying flat, but he did not enter.

<sup>6</sup>Then Simon Peter came, following him and entered the tomb; he, too, saw the linen cloths lying flat. <sup>7</sup>The napkin, which had been around his head, was not lying flat like the other linen cloths but lay rolled up in its place. <sup>8</sup>Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in; he saw and believed. <sup>9</sup>Scripture clearly said that Jesus must rise from the dead, but they had not yet understood that.

<sup>10</sup>The disciples went back to their homes.

<sup>11</sup>Mary stood weeping outside the tomb; and as she wept, she bent down to look inside. <sup>12</sup>She saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head and the other at the feet. <sup>13</sup>They said, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She answered, “Because they have taken my *Lord* and I don’t know where they have put him.”

<sup>14</sup>As she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not recognize him. <sup>15</sup>Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?” She thought it was the gardener and answered him, “Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him and I will go and take him away.”

<sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him, “Rabboni!”—which means *Master*. <sup>17</sup>Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to

them: I am ascending to my Father, who is your Father, to my God, who is your God.”

<sup>18</sup>So Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the *Lord* and this is what he said to me.”

<sup>19</sup>On the evening of that day, the first day after the Sabbath, the doors were locked where the disciples were, because of their fear of the Jews. But Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you!” <sup>20</sup>Then he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples, seeing the *Lord*, were full of joy.

<sup>21</sup>Again Jesus said to them, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” <sup>22</sup>After saying this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit! <sup>23</sup>Those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; those whose sins you retain, they are retained.”

<sup>24</sup>Thomas, the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>The other disciples told him, “We have seen the *Lord*.” But he replied, “Until I have seen in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

<sup>26</sup>Eight days later, the disciples were again inside the house and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you!” <sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands; stretch out your hand, and put it into my side. Do not continue in your unbelief, but believe!”

<sup>28</sup>Thomas said, “You are my *Lord* and my God.” <sup>29</sup>Jesus replied, “You believe because you see me, don’t you? Happy are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

## Conclusion

<sup>30</sup>There were many other signs that Jesus gave in the presence of his disciples, but they are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup>These are recorded, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Believe, and you will have life through his name!

### JOHN 20:1-31

**Read:** Mary Magdalene finds the tomb empty. The Beloved Disciple is the first to believe. Mary recognizes Jesus when he calls her by her name. Jesus appears to the disciples twice. Thomas,

seeing the traces of the suffering of Jesus, also believes. Jesus blesses all those who never seeing or touching him come to believe in him. The writer of the Gospel says this book was written so the reader might come to believe in Jesus and share his eternal life.

**Reflect:** What relationship did Jesus and Magdalene have? Peter and the beloved disciple? What does it mean to you that Jesus is alive? Do you also have doubts like Thomas? Do you need to see to believe? What does the following expression suggest to you: “Happy those who believe without having seen”?

**Pray:** Faith, like life itself, requires constant care. Ask the Lord the grace of deepening your experience of faith. The beloved disciple saw the bandages and believed. Pray for the people who struggle to preserve their faith in the midst of situations of death, neglect or persecution.

**Act:** Celebrate the resurrection of Jesus by participating and collaborating in some Easter activity in your parish.

## Appendix: the appearance of Jesus by the lake

**21**<sup>1</sup>After this, Jesus revealed himself to the disciples by the Lake of Tiberias. He appeared to them in this way: <sup>2</sup>Simon Peter, Thomas who was called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two other disciples were together; <sup>3</sup>and Simon Peter said to them, “I’m going fishing.” They replied, “We will come with you.” And they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

<sup>4</sup>When the sun came up, Jesus was standing on the shore, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus called out, “Friends, have you anything to eat?” They answered, “Nothing.” <sup>6</sup>Then he said to them, “Throw the net on the right side of the boat and you will find something.” When they had lowered the net, they were not able to pull it in because of the great number of fish.

<sup>7</sup>Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, “It’s the Lord!” At these words, “It’s the Lord!” Simon Peter put on his clothes, for he was stripped for work, and jumped into the water. <sup>8</sup>The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish; they were not far from land, about a hundred meters.

<sup>9</sup>When they landed, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and some bread. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you’ve just caught.” <sup>11</sup>So Simon Peter climbed into the boat and pulled the net to shore. It was full of big fish—one hundred and fifty-three—but, in spite of this, the net was not torn.

<sup>12</sup>Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” And not one of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” for they knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them and he did the same with the fish.

<sup>14</sup>This was the third time that Jesus revealed himself to his disciples after rising from the dead.

### JOHN 21:1-14

**Read:** This chapter begins with the appearance of Jesus by the lake. The disciples are fishing but catch nothing. However, when they pay attention to Jesus words, they catch more than they can imagine. The beloved disciple recognizes him, and Peter, then, acts with impetuosity. The story ends with Jesus making breakfast, once more feeding his disciples.

**Reflect:** What image do you have of Peter in all this gospel? What things characterize him? Can you identify with him?

**Pray:** Ask the Lord for grace so that you can trust in his Word. So that, like Peter, be ready to go to encounter him and available at the service of the community.

**Act:** Invite your neighbors to a meal and feel the presence of the risen Jesus in them.

<sup>15</sup>After they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these do?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” And Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

<sup>16</sup>A second time Jesus said to him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” And Peter answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Look after my sheep.” <sup>17</sup>And a third time he said to him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was saddened because Jesus asked him a third time, “Do you love me?” and he said, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.”

Jesus then said, “Feed my sheep! <sup>18</sup>Truly, I say to you, when you were young, you put on your belt and walked where you liked. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will put a belt around you, and lead you where you do not wish to go.”

<sup>19</sup>Jesus said this to make known the kind of death by which Peter was to glorify God. And he added, “Follow me!”

<sup>20</sup>Peter looked back and saw that the disciple Jesus loved was following as well, the one who had reclined close to Jesus at the supper and had asked him, “Lord, who is to betray you?” <sup>21</sup>On seeing him, Peter asked Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” <sup>22</sup>Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain until I come, is that any concern of yours? Follow me!”

<sup>23</sup>Because of this, the rumor spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to Peter, “He will not die,” but, “Suppose I want him to remain until I come back, what concern is that of yours?”

<sup>24</sup>It is this disciple who testifies about the things and has written these things down, and we know that his testimony is true. <sup>25</sup>But Jesus did many other things; if all were written down, I think the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.

### JOHN 21:15-25

**Read:** The final scene involves Jesus, Peter, and the Beloved Disciple. Peter makes his profession of love to the Lord and Jesus gives him the mission to care for his sheep. The Beloved Disciple is the one “testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true.”

**Reflect:** What do the attitudes of Peter and the beloved disciple suggest? To what do they invite you? How do you witness the resurrection of the Lord in your family?

**Pray:** Pray for the leaders of the Church, so that with their life and preaching they may at all times give testimony of their love for Jesus and their faith in the resurrection and eternal life.

**Act:** Tell your friends the good things that Popes John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul I, John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis did in favor of the Church and the world. Give thanks to God for them.