

# 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter B

***Holy father, keep those you have given me true to your name. I'm not asking you to remove them from the world but to protect them from the evil one. (Jn 17:11b.15)***



## First Reading

*Acts 1:15-17.20-26*

One day Peter stood up to speak to the brothers – there were about a hundred and twenty persons in the congregation: "Brothers, the passage of scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit, speaking through David, foretells the fate of Judas, who offered himself as a guide to the men who arrested Jesus – after having been one of our number and actually sharing this ministry of ours.

In the Book of Psalms it says: Let someone else take his office.

We must therefore choose someone who has been with us the whole time that the Lord Jesus was travelling round with us, someone who was with us right from the time when John was baptising until the day when he was taken up from us – and he can act with us as a witness to his resurrection."

Having nominated two candidates, Joseph known as Barsabbas, whose surname was Justus, and Matthias, they prayed, "Lord, you can read everyone's heart; show us therefore which of these two you have chosen to take over this ministry and apostolate, which Judas abandoned to go to his proper place." They then drew lots for them and as the lot fell to Matthias, he was listed as one of the twelve apostles.

## Second Reading

*1 John 4:11-16*

My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another. No one has ever seen God; but as long as we love one another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us. We can know that we are living in him and he is living in us because he lets us share his Spirit. We ourselves saw and we testify that the Father sent his Son as saviour of the world. If anyone acknowledges that

Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him, and he in God. We ourselves have known and put our faith in God's love towards ourselves. God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him.

## **Gospel**

*John 17:11-19*

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: "Holy Father, keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us. While I was with them, I kept those you had given me true to your name. I have watched over them and not one is lost except the one who chose to be lost, and this was to fulfil the scriptures. But now I am coming to you and while still in the world I say these things to share my joy with them to the full. I passed your word on to them, and the world hated them, because they belong to the world no more than I belong to the world. I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world, and for their sake I consecrate myself so that they too may be consecrated in truth."

## **Meditation**

*In the discourse after the Last Supper, Christ intercedes for his Church. The master communicates to his disciples the paradoxical words they will have to live after his Ascension. They will be "in the world" but yet "not of the world". Christians are not to be tourists who pass through life without committing themselves to it. The gospel preaches no mystique of evasion. It commands Jesus' disciples to submit themselves to the law of his incarnation by taking on all that is human except sin and by refusing to ally themselves with evil and its kingdom of lies.*

*They will also be the butt of "the world's hatred" and yet "filled with joy". For the sinful world cannot but oppose the subversion of a gospel which proclaims that the things of this world will pass away and that we must put our hearts where true joys lie. This is an uncomfortable attitude. It is heroic even for those who know the secret of joy, the beatitude promised to those who strive in the name of Christ to liberate humanity at home, at work, in the city. They are "consecrated by means of truth" in order to transmit life as Christ does. We can be sent as apostles only if we embrace his cross. It is by offering ourselves with him as living victims, holy and pleasing to God, that we are plunged into profound communion in God. Jesus approached his own passion praying for each of us so that the paradox of the cross might bear fruit in us.*