

## In the weeks ahead

Read and ponder the poem below

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John  
Are read by more than a few,  
But the one that is most read and commented on  
Is the gospel according to you.

You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day  
By the things that you do and the words that you say,  
People read what you write, whether faithless or true.  
Say, what is the gospel according to you?

Do people read His truth and His love in your life?  
Or has yours been too full of malice and strife?  
Does your life speak of evil, or does it ring true?  
Say, what is the gospel according to you?

*Arthur McPhee*

*Spend a few moments in personal reflection on*

- What does the gospel according to me look like?
- How does this differ from how I would like it to look?

Between now and Pentecost, people might like to read through Acts and note the similarities between the experiences of those people in the early Church and in our own day. Use the reflection journal to note down and pray through any thoughts and insights that emerge.

## Closing Prayer: Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord,  
all the earth.  
Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come into his presence with singing.

Know that the Lord is God.  
It is he that made us, and we are his;  
we are his people,  
and the sheep of his pasture.  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving,  
and his courts with praise.  
Give thanks to him, bless his name.

For the Lord is good;  
his steadfast love endures for ever,  
and his faithfulness to all generations.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
As it was in the beginning,  
is now and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen.

Lent 2019 Year C

EASTERTIME

God's Gifts of Love and Mercy:  
Taking—Receiving—Sharing



# God's Gift of Love and Mercy: Taking - Receiving - Sharing

## Opening Responses

Reader We gather in the name of the Father

**All The God whose tenderness and compassion holds all of Creation in being.**

Reader We gather in the name of the Son

**All Our Lord, Jesus Christ, who shows in his risen life, the glorious face of divine mercy.**

Reader We gather in the name of the Holy Spirit

**All The Breath of Life breathed on the disciples— the Breath of Life breathed upon us— so that we might give to others the grace and mercy we have received.**

Reader We gather...

**All (making the Sign of the Cross) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## Setting the Scene

During Eastertime, we move away from the Old Testament for our First Readings and on into the Acts of the Apostles. Despite its title, it does not tell us what each of the apostles did after the Resurrection but focuses mainly on Peter and Paul with mentions of others such as John and Philip. There are rich traditional accounts of what happened to these apostles but they are not recorded in our canon of scripture – probably because they were so widely dispersed and word did not always get back to the writer of Acts – probably St Luke – about what they were doing.

The Acts of the Apostles is the account of the growth of the early Church from a few terrified people in a locked room in Jerusalem to Rome – to Ethiopia – to Syria – to Greece – and many other places where the gospel of Jesus Christ took root. The apostles – as we know from reading the gospels – were an unpromising bunch but the power of the Spirit was able to work in and through them to begin the changing of the world – from a few dozen followers to a billion in the world today.

We hear of their successes – and some of their failures but it is good to remind ourselves as we read Acts that these were not the high-fliers and people everyone knew would succeed – but ordinary folk through whom God would do extraordinary things.

## To ponder

- How does going back to the early days of the Church help us to see how God works through ordinary people to do extraordinary things?

## Reading – Acts 10: 34, 37-43

Then Peter began to speak to Cornelius and his household: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

## Sharing Reflections

- Why might Peter have preferred just to preach the good news to fellow-Jews?
- What difference does it make that Peter opened his mind and heart and obeyed God's command to preach his love and mercy to all peoples?