

May 8/9, 2021 • Sixth Sunday of Easter

First Reading: Acts 10

[By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Evangelist St. Luke writes:]

Acts 10:1-48

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God. About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius."

And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?"

And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside."

When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who attended him, and having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."

But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean."

And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there.

And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them."

And Peter went down to the men and said, "I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming?"

And they said, "Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say." ²³So he invited them in to be his guests.

The next day he rose and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends.

When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man." ²⁷And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered.

And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me."

And Cornelius said, "Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.' So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all), you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put Him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised Him on the third day and made Him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with Him after he rose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To Him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name."

While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God.

Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

Psalm: Psalm 98; antiphon: v. 2

1 Oh sing to the Lord a new song,
for He has done marvelous things!

His right hand and His holy arm
have worked salvation for Him.

2 The Lord has made known His salvation;
He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

3 He has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

5 Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,

with the lyre and the sound of melody!

6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!

7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who dwell in it!

8 Let the rivers clap their hands;
let the hills sing for joy together

9 before the Lord, for He comes
to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.

Epistle: 1 John 5:1-8

[By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle John writes:]

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is He who came by water and blood – Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

Gospel: John 15:9-17

[By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle John writes:]

[After describing Himself as the Vine and His disciples as the branches who need to abide in Him, in His Word, if they are to bear fruit, Jesus continued:] "As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another."

Introit: Psalm Psalm 66:1-2, 8-9, 20; antiphon: v. 16

Come and hear, all you who fear God,

and I will tell what He has done for my soul.

Shout for joy to God, all the earth;

sing the glory of His name; give to Him glorious praise!

Bless our God, O peoples;

let the sound of His praise be heard,

who has kept our soul among the living

and has not let our feet slip.

Blessèd be God,

because He has not rejected my prayer or removed His steadfast love from me!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Come and hear, all you who fear God,

and I will tell what He has done for my soul.

Collect of the Day

O God, the giver of all that is good, by Your holy inspiration grant that we may think those things that are right and by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Gradual: adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

Christ has risen from the dead.

[God the Father] has crowned him with glory and honor.

He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;

he has put all things under his feet.

Verse: Romans 6:9; John 16:33b

Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. Alleluia.

Content from Lutheran Service Book: Altar Book copyright © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV Bible® (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved.

Hymn of the Day: 556 Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice