

Reading for Weekday in the Second Week of Eastertide

April 16th 2026

First reading

Acts 5:27-33

‘We are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit.’

In those days: When the officers had brought the Apostles, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, saying, ‘We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.’ But Peter and the Apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 34(33):2, 9. 17-18, 19-20. R7a

*The lowly one called, and the Lord heard him.
or: Alleluia.*

I will bless the Lord at all times,
praise of him is always in my mouth.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
Blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.
The Lord turns his face against the wicked
to cut off their remembrance from the earth.
When the just one cries out, the Lord hears,
and rescues him in all his distress.
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;
those whose spirit is crushed he will save.
Many are the trials of the just one,
but from them all the Lord will rescue him.

Gospel Acclamation

John 20:29

Alleluia, alleluia.
You believed, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord.
Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.
Alleluia.

Gospel

John 3:31-36

‘The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.’

He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all. He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony. Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

Short reflection on the reading for today

Today's text from Acts offers an instance of radically following Jesus : "We testify and so does the Holy Spirit," said St. Peter. It suggests that we need the Holy Spirit's guidance through personal prayer before we can really bear witness to Christ. In conflict situations we can also check out our ideas with an honest mentor. It is good to have someone who will tell us the plain truth and help us distinguish between courage and mere obstinacy.

Prayer and spiritual guidance help to free us from our obsessions and our comfort zones. Another way of testing our ideas is seen in Peter's reference to *the God of our ancestors*. Do we consult the Bible seriously, to stay in tune with the early church's faith? We need this kind of listening for a genuine, integrated spirituality. If we just pick and choose texts to suit ourselves, it merely reinforces our fixed ideas. We need guidance both from tradition and the Holy Spirit. Then our words, like those of the early Christians, will bear authentic witness and can help to bring others to a fuller faith.

Jesus is aware that he "comes down from above", and that the Father has entrusted everything to him. None of those things applied to John the Baptist. He recognised the uniqueness of Jesus, which is why he could say, "he must increase, but I must decrease."

Like the Baptist, we cannot fully appreciate the mystery of Jesus. The closer we come to him, the more we know how much we need to grow. We too can say, "he must increase; I must decrease." As his presence increases in us and our *ego* welcomes him, we don't cease to be ourselves. The more he grows in us, the more we fulfil our potential and become all that God wants us to be.