

Reading for Weekday in the Second Week of Eastertide

April 13th 2026

First reading

Acts 4:23-31

When they had prayed, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

In those days: When Peter and John were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, 'Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed" — for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.' And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 2:1-3. 4-6. 7-9. R cf. 12c

Blessed are all who trust in you, O Lord.

or: Alleluia.

Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain?

They arise, the kings of the earth; princes plot against the Lord and his Anointed.

'Let us burst asunder their fetters. Let us cast off from us their chains.'

He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord derides and mocks them.

Then he will speak in his anger, his rage will strike them with terror.

'It is I who have appointed my king on Sion, my holy mountain.'

I will announce his decree: the Lord said to me, 'You are my Son.

It is I who have begotten you this day.

Ask of me and I will make nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth as your possession.

With a rod of iron you will rule them; like a potter's jar you will shatter them.'

Gospel Acclamation

Colossians 3:1

Alleluia, alleluia.

If you have been raised with Christ,

seek the things that are above,

where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Alleluia.

Gospel

John 3:1-8

‘Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, one cannot enter the kingdom of God.’

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, ‘Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.’ Jesus answered him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, “You must be born anew.” The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

When and where the Spirit will guide us, cannot be determined ahead of time. As Jesus said, “The wind blows where it will... You do not know where it comes from or where it goes.” The Hebrew *ruah* and its Greek equivalent *pneuma* mean both *wind* and *spirit*. Even people who have experienced the guidance of the divine Spirit cannot determine where the Spirit will lead in the future.

In today’s gospel, as again in Acts chapter 10, the Spirit comes unexpectedly, without warning. In fact, the sudden gift of the Holy Spirit to Cornelius the Roman centurion took St Peter by surprise. The apostle exclaims: “What can stop these people from being baptized?” Peter is willing to face the consequences of baptizing those Romans, without asking them to undergo circumcision. He thus anticipated Saint Paul in opening the doors of the Church to pagans, or Gentiles.

John presents Nicodemus as seeking the truth in a literal-minded way, so that at first he finds Jesus’ spiritual statements hard to fathom. He resists the Lord’s talk about re-birth. “How can a man be born again once he is old? Can he return to his mother’s womb?” Despite such resistance the Holy Spirit can bring one to a new birth. By the gift of the Spirit we begin to live a new quality of life. Our responses to friends, our ideals and scale of values, all aspects of our life will look different, if we welcome the Spirit’s inspiration.

What the Holy Spirit achieves in us is a spiritual not a physical rebirth. We do not re-enter our mother’s womb. Rather an inner change takes place which activates our hidden potential and sharpens what had become dull and boring, to make us what we are meant to be, “salt of the earth.”

Nicodemus came to Jesus in secret, *by night*. He was a Pharisee, one of a group consistently opposed Jesus. This Pharisee was exceptional in letting himself be drawn to the Gospel. His first approach was tentative, coming to visit Jesus under cover of darkness. His final appearance in John’s gospel is open and public, when along with Joseph of Arimathea he ensures that Jesus gets a dignified burial.

The Nicodemus story invites us to make progress in our relationship with Jesus. Even if we are lukewarm at times, we can grow more committed as life moves on. But spiritual growth does not come by will-power alone; it is ultimately the work of the Spirit in our hearts. We need to be Spirit-born to enter the kingdom of God. As a sailboat needs the wind, we need the Spirit to fill our sails for the voyage of life. This Easter is a good time to again invite the Holy Spirit to be our guide in life.