

MAY 14, 2017
FIFTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER



We are a chosen people.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 14:1-14	Jesus is the way, truth, and life
Monday	Proverbs 10:27-32	The way of the Lord
Tuesday	John 8:31-36	The truth will set you free
Wednesday	John 18:28-38	Jesus and Pilate speak of truth
Thursday	Acts 7:55-60	The stoning of Steven
Friday	1 Peter 2:1-10	Growing as God's people
Saturday	Psalms 31	A prayer for protection
Sunday	John 14:15-21	The promise of the Holy Spirit

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

But you are God's chosen and special people. You are a group of royal priests and a holy nation. God has brought you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Now you must tell all the wonderful things that he has done. **1 Peter 2:9 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, please help us to walk in your way, hold to your truth, and live with your power. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank you for the blessings of this day, for food to eat with spoon, fork, and knife. May we have the faith to walk your way, full of your peace and truth and life. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

As God's chosen race, royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, may God bless you in the way of Jesus, the truth of Jesus, and life in his name.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK
*Take My Life, That
I May Be*



CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- When have you been chosen for special recognition?
- What difference does it make that God has chosen you?
- When Jesus says that he is the way, he emphasizes a relationship to him that leads his followers to do the works that Jesus does in the world, and "even greater things" will be done by Jesus' disciples (John 14:6, 12). What does it mean to be Christ to the world?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Acts 7:55-60.

Terullian, an early church father stated, "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church." That is, those who have witnessed to the faith with their lives have led to the growth of the church. The martyrdom of St. Stephen is just such an example. His gruesome death by stoning led to the exodus of the church from Jerusalem to "Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). His death led to a movement out of Jerusalem that helped fulfill what the resurrected Lord said to the disciples before his ascension. Take a moment to wonder how times of suffering have produced growth and new life for you and for the body of Christ. Close by praying the Lord's Prayer.

SERVICE



People sometimes resist the idea that Christians are a chosen people because it suggests a level of privilege others do not get. However, in the Old and New Testament, being elected (chosen) is about the mission that is given to the elected. In 1 Peter 2:9, to be the "chosen race" means being a "holy nation," that is, a people set apart to serve: to "tell all the wonderful things that he has done." Offer prayers for missionaries around the globe, including mission starts in your own community. Consider how you are part of the outreach work of the church.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



This Sunday is Mother's Day. Take time to recognize mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and all women who have helped you grow and develop over the years. At a meal or other occasion with family and/or friends take turns saying, "**Lord God, I am thankful for (her name) because . . .**"

Conclude with the following prayer, "**Lord God, thank you for the gift of mothers and all women who have made a difference in our lives, including (names). For the care that they have given us and the guidance they have shared with us, we give you thanks. Amen.**"



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