

MAY 10, 2020  
FIFTH SUNDAY  
OF EASTER



*Christian martyrs witness to God's love.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 14:1-14</b>	<b>Jesus is the way, truth, and life</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Acts 7:55-60</b>	<b>The stoning of Stephen</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>1 Peter 2:2-10</b>	<b>A chosen people</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Romans 8:31-39</b>	<b>God's love in Christ Jesus</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Hebrews 11:29-40</b>	<b>The faith of heroes</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>2 Corinthians 12:1-10</b>	<b>Contentment in suffering</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 31:1-5, 15-16</b>	<b>Prayer for deliverance</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 14:15-21</b>	<b>The promise of the Holy Spirit</b>

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father." **John 14:12 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Almighty God, you send us out to witness to the work of Jesus; give us confidence and courage to be your faithful witnesses. Amen.

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, may this food strengthen the body and your word strengthen the soul to be your witnesses in the world. Amen.

#### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the face of God shine on you and bless you through the steadfast love of the Lord. (Psalm 31:16)



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### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Mothering God, You  
Gave Me Birth*



### WEEKLY MILESTONES



Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Where do you see God's presence in the world?
- What does the life of Jesus tell you about God?
- John 14:12 is about a relationship with God. How do you help others have this relationship?

### DEVOTIONS



*Read:* Acts 7:55-60.

Martyrdom is too often spoken of today in terms of suicide bombs that kill. That is not a Christian martyr. Stephen presents the model of Christian martyrdom for all time. He innocently suffers and dies at the hands of others; he does not act violently. Stephen imitates Christ's death by blessing one's enemies (v. 60). He also experiences the holy bliss of being filled with the Holy Spirit and seeing the glory of God and Jesus (v. 55). He has a rapturous experience of the triune God. Few of us will have that same experience, but we are still all martyrs. The word simply means "witness." We are witnesses to God's living presence when we suffer unfairly for the love of God, when we bless others, and when we experience the peace that passes all human understanding. In the midst of a world of hate, violence, and self-promotion, it is not possible to be a faithful witness on our own. It is the work of God that fills us with the Holy Spirit, witnesses to the love of God, and blesses others. Christian martyrdom is all around us. Who has been a witness to the love of God for you recently?  
*Pray:* **O, Holy Jesus, give me faith to witness to your love, to suffer with others for the sake of love, and to bless others with hope in your Easter victory. Amen.**

### SERVICE



Psalm 31 is a prayer of deliverance from enemies. Even though there is suffering and pain, the psalmist writes of trust in the Lord and of God's goodness. Watch or read today's news. Who in the world needs prayer for deliverance from enemies? Pray for their deliverance.

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Today is Mother's Day in the United States. It is a time to recognize and be thankful for those women in our lives who have cared for us and for others. Be a witness for God's love and reach out to a woman you know who deserves a special thank you with a phone call or a visit. Take time to talk and then say this prayer for her.

**Lord God, thank you for (name). May she know how grateful I am to have her in my life. Please bless her this day and every day with your love and care. Amen.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)