

# Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

## Suggestions for Leading Worship



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**RE:** Liturgical Suggestions for the Sixth Sunday of Easter – Cycle A

**Sunday date:** April 26-27, 2008

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Dear Fathers and Deacons,

### **An Overview for this Sunday...**

(Please note that the Solemnity of the Ascension is celebrated in the Diocese of Baton Rouge next Sunday, May 4. In all dioceses where the Ascension is transferred to Sunday, it is an option to use the Second Reading and the Gospel passage from the Seventh Sunday of Easter on this, the sixth, Sunday of Easter.)

In this last half of the Easter Season the Scripture readings now begin to focus our attention on preparing for the coming of the Holy Spirit. In the First Reading from the Acts of the Apostles, Peter and John are sent from Jerusalem to Samaria to be ministers of the coming of the Spirit to the new converts in that town. These people had already been baptized “in the name of the Lord Jesus,” and the imposition of the apostles’ hands completes their initiation.

The Second Reading from the First Letter of St. Peter calls us to “Sanctify Christ the Lord in your hearts.” It is because of Jesus’ “life in the Spirit” that we are able to still able to have hope in the midst of persecution and suffering.

This Sunday’s Gospel begins and ends with the invitation to love Jesus by keeping His commandments. But this gospel is not only about our love, it is also about God’s love for us.

God does everything possible to share divine life with us, even sending us an Advocate, the Spirit of truth.

Love is revealed in action. Disciples love Jesus by keeping His commandments. Jesus loves His disciples by revealing Himself to them. The Father shows love by sending the Spirit to dwell with disciples always. The fruit of love is intimate relationship with Jesus and the Father. Thus, Jesus assures us we are not alone, we are not orphans. We are the beloved of God.

### **Questions for Sharing Faith...**

1. How does my love for God and Christ lead me to keep the Commandments?
2. What does it mean when Jesus says he will send another Advocate, the Spirit of Truth to be with us?
3. How does the love of Jesus inspire my service for others?

### **Some Considerations as you Prepare...**

1. Enthusiasm for the Easter season may be waning. Make sure that the solemnity of the Easter Season is maintained today and through the next two Sundays. Continue the Rite of Sprinkling and the singing of the Gloria. Try to include the singing of the Alleluia in all the songs of the liturgy. Be sure that the liturgical environment reflects the celebratory spirit of the Easter Season.
2. The prayers of the *Missal* reflect the general spirit of the Easter season. They do not necessarily reflect the specific themes of the day's readings.
3. The Third Preface for Easter (P23) refers to Jesus as the Advocate – the meaning of the word “Paraclete” – which we have been hearing in the Gospel of John.
4. A Solemn Blessing is included in the *Missal* for the conclusion of today's liturgy.

## Sample Prayers of the Faithful for the Sixth Sunday of Easter

*Priest:* Trusting in Jesus who will never leave us orphaned, let us pray in the power of the Spirit.

*Deacon* (or other reader if there is no deacon):

1. That Pope Benedict and the college of bishops, and all other leaders in the Church, may be filled with hope, proclaiming the faith with gentleness and respect for others, we pray to the Lord.
2. That world leaders may be challenged to work for justice and peace by the presence and witness of Christ's disciples in our societies, we pray to the Lord.
3. That the Spirit of God may inspire the followers of Jesus and people of goodwill to assist children left orphaned by violence, war or economic adversity, we pray to the Lord.
4. That those preparing to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit may find in that sacred anointing and laying-on-of-hands the reassuring love of Christ, we pray to the Lord.
5. That the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, may in us convince the world of God's abiding love for all, we pray to the Lord.
6. That those who have died may live forever with God in Christ, we pray to the Lord.

*Priest:* Not as orphans did Jesus leave us, O God,  
for He asked you to give us another Advocate:  
the Spirit of truth, to be with us forever.  
Let your Holy Spirit abide with us always,  
To keep us steadfast in suffering,  
Gentle in bearing witness,  
Faithful in keeping Christ's commandments.  
We ask this through the same Christ our Lord.  
Amen.