

**Jesus' Prayer for All Believers**  
**John 17: 20-26**

“I pray not only for them,  
but also for those who will believe in me through  
their word,  
so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in  
me and I in you,  
that they also may be in us, that the world may  
believe that you sent me.  
And I have given them the glory you gave me, so  
that they may be one, as we are one,  
I in them and you in me, that they may be brought  
to perfection as one,  
that the world may know that you sent me,  
and that you loved them even as you loved me.  
Father, they are your gift to me.  
I wish that where I am they also may be with me,  
that they may see my glory that you gave me,  
because you loved me before the foundation of the  
world.  
Righteous Father,  
the world also does not know you,  
but I know you, and they know that you sent me.  
I made known to them your name and I will make  
it known,  
that the love with which you loved me may be in  
them and I in them.”

**7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter/Feast of the Ascension**



Jesus spent significant time journeying with his disciples before approaching his fateful death. Over the course of three years, twelve ordinary individuals were called by name and were taught by Christ, shared meals together, and witnessed our Lord offer tender healing to those that sought him. They knew him because they spent time with him, not because they were theologians or biblical scholars.

Throughout the Easter season, the first readings each Sunday are taken from Acts of the Apostles and give us an opportunity to see the Holy Spirit working through a group of men and women that have been touched by Christ. Peter, who turned his back on Jesus as he was being put to death, has a radical conversion of spirit and leads many to Christianity. We can see our own path woven through the stories of the apostles whom, after having a firsthand encounter with Jesus, are filled with joy, freedom, and hope.

It is prudent that we learn from their eagerness to serve as we make ourselves available to our brothers and sisters looking for a morsel of hope and freedom from addiction. Spending time in scripture, we can see how the apostles' boldness brought the faith to all corners of the globe.

Some parishes will celebrate the Ascension of the Lord this coming Sunday, hearing Jesus tell his disciples, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Others will hear the gospel reading for the seventh Sunday of Easter, set just prior to Christ's arrest. Listen as our Lord beautifully invokes his prayer to the Father before giving over his earthly freedom:

*Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus prayed saying:  
"Now I am coming to you.  
I speak this in the world  
so that they may share my joy completely.  
I gave them your word, and the world hated them,  
because they do not belong to the world  
any more than I belong to the world.  
I do not ask that you take them out of the world  
but that you keep them from the evil one.  
They do not belong to the world  
any more than I belong to the world.  
Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth.  
As you sent me into the world,  
so I sent them into the world.  
And I consecrate myself for them,  
so that they also may be consecrated in truth."*

Whether embarking upon our first month of sobriety or counting decades, we get an opportunity to return to the truth that is God's word. In our recovery from alcoholism, drug addiction, compulsive overeating, gambling, porn and sex addiction, codependency, and other unhealthy attachments, we get the unique opportunity to experience a past that keeps us moving toward a brighter future. We know the depths and darkness of what the world has to offer.

God is our answer. As faithful Catholics, we get to experience Him in the sacraments of healing and forgiveness. He surrounds us in the body of Christ that makes up our fellowship. We are in the world but not of the world, and can make a home here while remaining in God and seeking to do His will. While doing so, we hope to share in Christ's joy completely.