

5th Sunday of Easter (a)

Introduction

*leader: Greet the people and name the Sunday of the Year (see above)
Acknowledge visitors and welcome them.
Remind everyone that there will be refreshments ???
Announce the theme of the liturgy (see next)*

Theme – ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

*leader: The good news of Easter is that through the risen Jesus, others are empowered in the skills to live in a new way! There's pain, sweat and occasional failure. But this is the stuff out of which true change happens. This is the basis of our profoundest hopes for our world.
(Announce the opening hymn:)*

Greeting

*presider: Ki te ingoa o te Matua, ✠ o te Tamaiti, o te Wairua Tapu:
The grace of our LORD Jesus Christ, whose table we share,
be with us.*

*all: **And with your spirit***

Penitential Rite *Invitation to Repentance* *either*

leader: Gathered together in Christ, let us ask forgiveness with confidence, for GOD is gentle and compassionate.

*all: **I confess: . . .***

or

leader: Friends, in preparing his disciples for the day of his "departure" Jesus tells them he's going ahead, so he can prepare a place for them at their journey's end:

- *Jesus shows us how to do the truth; but we substitute words for action; busyness for reflection: - (pause) - **LORD, have mercy:***
- *We fool ourselves; that what we believe is more important than how we believe! - (pause) - **CHRIST, have mercy:***
- *Jesus shows us how to do the Truth; with tough minds and tender hearts. But too often our minds are soft; and our hearts tough! - (pause) - **LORD, have mercy:***

May almighty GOD, cleanse us of our sins and through the celebration of this Eucharist make us worthy to sit at the table of GOD's realm:

*all: **Amen***

GLORIA *an invitation*

leader: With all the voices of heaven, let us sing praise, honour and glory to GOD.

Opening Prayer

leader: (Kia inoi tatou: / Let us pray, . . .) We have beheld Your glory, O GOD, in the face of Christ Jesus, Your Son.

Enliven our faith, that through Christ we may put our trust in You.

Deepen our faith, that in Christ we may serve You.

Complete our faith, that one day we may live with You

in that place which Christ prepares for us,

where he lives with You now and always

in the unity of the Holy Spirit:

*all: **Amen.***

Introduction to the first reading: *(Acts 6: 1 – 7)*

leader: Acts tells how the body of believers grew in number. Tensions between the old ways and the startling new way of life began to affect the movement.

Introduction to the second reading: *(1 Peter 2: 4 – 9)*

leader: The author of the Letter underlines that all followers of Jesus belong to the priesthood of believers by their baptism. Although they are resident aliens in Asia Minor, they can become the elect and holy people of GOD – they can be, "of the household" of the Spirit.

Gospel Acclamation:

*all: **LORD, let Your mercy be on us; as we place our trust in You. Alleluia!***

Introduction to the gospel reading: *(John 14: 1 – 12)*

leader: Jesus talks about his "departure" and about freeing his disciples from death. He had earlier spoken about the revelation of "the glory of GOD" in his dying. What will happen to the disciples he leaves behind? Jesus speaks about humanity united in a single family household – GOD's household – he says it's very roomy.

Homily Notes *presider:*

- *The Hellenists were Hebrews from outside Palestine. In Jerusalem, they had their own synagogues, where the scriptures were read in Greek. The Hebrews were native Palestinians. Their language was Aramaic, but the scriptures were read in Hebrew in their synagogues. The way the community's resources were being managed, brought matters to a head. The apostles publicly, "put their weight behind" or "laid their hands on", seven men. They were to "stand-in" for the apostles. They were to distribute food so that the apostles would be free to concentrate on prayer and preaching the gospel.*
- *In response to a growing community need, the apostles select and hand on responsibility to others for distributing food in the community. They "put their weight behind" seven men, including Stephen, the first*

martyr of the new movement(v.6). The Seven already possess the necessary spirit/Spirit and wisdom for the task (v.3).

- *Neither the Hebrew nor the Christian scriptures envisioned or knew of a rite of priestly ordination. Ministerial ordination is prior to, and wider than, what has come to be understood by priestly ordination today. Stephen and the other six who have the necessary qualities, are authorised to direct the daily distribution of food and to ensure the resources of the community are managed equitably on behalf of the disadvantaged (vv.2-3).*
- *Later in Acts, Stephen takes a different role. He confronts the opponents of the new movement, "filled with power and courage"(Ac.6:9ff). He preaches, teaches, witnesses and interprets the claims of the gospel. His preaching evokes a hostile response from a type of listener, who "forever opposes the Holy Spirit"(Ac.7:51). All from the old world wanted to stop, silence, and destroy the new power for life-giving unleashed in the resurrection of Jesus.*
- *The election of Stephen and the others, "full of faith and the Holy Spirit" is about the surprising and dangerous power of GOD's Spirit at work bringing newness in society through the actions of the disciples who are indeed extending the work of Jesus. The author of the Letter underlines that all followers of Jesus belong to the priesthood of believers, by their baptism. Although they are resident aliens in Asia Minor, they can become the elect and holy people of GOD – they can be, "of the household" of the spirit/Spirit of Jesus.*
- *In the second reading, the author reminds the Christian community that although they are resident aliens in Asia Minor, Jesus was also rejected "by the world" but never-the-less he was valued by GOD (v.4b). Jesus is the centre and focus of their new lives. He is a "living stone.". Christians too are "living stones" built around the "corner-stone" to be a building for Christ's use.*
- *The character and purpose of Jesus, shapes life of the Christian community. The community is to be an utterly new people, formed through GOD's powerful purpose. They have a mediating role in the world – to make healing contact possible between GOD and the world. Through the work of enormous love, disobedient people have been reclaimed as GOD's beloved, faithful ones. Such a community has no right to exist! Yet GOD has loved, and re-loved, this community into existence (v.9).*
- *The Christian community, or church, exists because of GOD's unconditional, community-creating love. The church is called to live differently in the world – as chosen, royal, holy, and GOD's own! It is no casual or accidental gathering of people – it is a special community based on different realities and called to different conduct. Belief is an active decision to be distinct in the world! Such living threatens to turn the world upside down.*

- *The words of the gospel come from the Supper Talk of Jesus, where He spoke of, "My Father's house" and about disciples sharing in the living-space there! In the moment of sacramental worship in the Eucharist the offer of the Way, Truth and Life, "lies on the table". The offer isn't forced on us. We are invited to go on with the work of Jesus and indeed to do "greater works!" But the condition for extending that work is: adopting Jesus' Way, Truth and Life. Thus our old way of life is subverted.*
- *The moment of worship and its presenters, provide us with the material for our transformation. But permission to subvert our old deadly world and to achieve great works for GOD, belongs to us to whom the offer is presented. This precious moment when GOD's newness is offered, is to be hosted with patient awe in order to make serious transformation possible! Like the seven in the early church, we are "pressed" to extend the work of Jesus!! Jesus released new life which overcame death, made the truth known, and promised to deliver GOD's holy Spirit. He promised faithful disciples will outdo His own achievements.*

Creed / Statement of Faith

Intercessions - 5th Week of Easter [Sun 3rd – Sat 9th May 2026]*invitation to pray:*

leader: Friends, we come before the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life. Confident, that our prayers will be heard, let us pray for our needs and the needs of our world:

1: For modern disciples of Jesus. May we trust in GOD still and trust in Jesus, to do the same works as he did. And to perform even greater works because he has gone to the Father: - (pause) – GOD of Truth, hear us:

*all: **GOD of Truth, hear us.***

2: For prisoners, the deported, the exiles – all who have no shelter or home. May they trust in GOD still, and trust in Jesus, whose modern disciples by their actions, remind the homeless ones, that Jesus included places for them in his Father's realm: - (pause) – GOD of Home-coming, hear us:

*all: **GOD of Home-coming, hear us.***

3: For those who perform the works of mercy. May they trust in GOD still and trust in Jesus; to perform great works without favouring anyone, as a testimony of GOD's love for the poor: - (pause) – GOD of Mercy, hear us:

*all: **GOD of Mercy, hear us.***

4: For all whose world has been shattered by violence and war. May the presence of the Risen Jesus through the caring hands of his modern disciples, touch them. Help us to show Your peaceful presence to all those who are ill, or tormented: - (pause) - GOD of Wholeness, hear us:

*all: **GOD of Wholeness, hear us.***

5: Healer of the sick, we pray to You for:

*(Mangawhai) **Petronella Brom, Pamela Downes, Chris Ohlson, Roselene Finnegan, Michael Oneil, Noreen Anderson, Michael Power, Liz Saunders,***

*(Maungaturoto) **Bill Lewis, Adolph Layec, Matthew Gould, Christine, McHugh, Jenny McKinnon,***

*(Wellsford) **Dallas Colville, Margaret Pride, Alec Colville, Loris Pricor, Gerry Kok, Jill Grace, Lagi Sands, Teresa Graham,***

Bless them for they share in Christ's passion through their suffering.

- (pause) - Healer of the Sick, hear us:

*all: **Healer of the Sick, hear us.***

*6: For those who have died recently: **Karl Freeze (Hokianga), Michael Drum,** And the dead in the world's conflict Zones, And for our dead whose whose anniversaries occur about now: **Jim Snoswell, Paddy Izard, Brian Marquis, Cecil Izard, Beatrice Jackson,** Number them among Your saints: - (pause) - GOD of New Life, hear us: *all: **GOD of New Life, hear us.****

Concluding Prayer:

*leader: GOD of Truth and Life, may all that we say or do be for Your glory and the common good. Hear our prayers and accept our gratitude. We make these prayers in Jesus' name: *all: **Amen****

Prayer over the Gifts

*presider: (Kia inoi tatou: ... / Let us pray, ...) O GOD of Power and Might,
through the wonderful exchange of this sacrifice
You have made us sharers in Your own divine nature;
grant that our daily lives may faithfully reflect
the knowledge of Your truth. We ask this through Jesus Christ:*

*all: **Amen***

Preface

presider: GOD be with you.

*all: **And also with you.***

presider: Lift up your hearts.

*all: **We lift them up to the LORD.***

presider: Let us give thanks to our GOD.

*all: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

*presider: It is truly right and just,
that we should always sing Your glory, O GOD;
but we praise You with greater joy than ever
in this Easter season
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.
Through him the children of light rise to eternal life
and the gates of heaven are unlocked
to receive his faithful people.
For his death is our ransom from death
and in his resurrection all are raised to new life.
Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:*

*all: **Holy holy holy!***

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Memorial Acclamation

(the Eucharistic Prayer ends with the great 'AMEN')

Introduction to the LORD's Prayer

*presider: With trust in GOD, who nourishes us in the hour of need,
let us pray as Jesus taught us:*

*all: **Our Father, ...***

*presider: Deliver us, LORD, we pray, from every evil;
graciously grant peace in our days,
that by the help of Your mercy,
we may be always freed from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

*all: **For the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours,***

now and for ever. Amen.

Sign of Peace

*presider: LORD Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles:
'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you'.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church
and grant us the peace and unity of your Realm,
where you live, now and always:*

*all: **Amen.***

presider: The peace of the LORD be with you:

*all: **And with your spirit.***

leader: Let us offer each other an appropriate sign of peace:

Lamb of GOD

*all: **Lamb of GOD, You take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us (x2)
Lamb of GOD, You take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.***

*presider: LORD Jesus Christ, Son of the living GOD,
who by the will of the Father
and the work of the Holy Spirit,
through your death gave life to the world;
free us by this your most holy Body and Blood
from all our sins and from every evil:
keep us always faithful to your commandments
and never let us be parted from you.*

*all: **Amen***

*presider: Behold the Lamb of GOD. Behold him who takes away the sins of
the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.*

*all: **LORD, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.***

Holy Communion

*presider: Ko te Tinana o te Karaiti:
(Ko nga Toto o te Karaiti:)*

Prayer after Communion

*leader: (Kia inoi tatou: ... / Let us pray, ...) O GOD of Power and Might,
remain close to the people You have enriched
with these heavenly mysteries,
and grant that we may pass from our former ways
to new life in the risen Christ.*

We make our prayer in the name of Jesus:

*all: **Amen.***

(an opportunity for announcements/notices etc. . . .)

Dismissal

*leader: We are sent; in the name of GOD,
Creator of all that lives and breathes;
we are sent in the name of Jesus,
the Way, Truth and Life of GOD;
we are sent in the name of the Holy Spirit,
Encourager of all who live trustfully;
to battle against ideologies and systems
that do not deliver their promises;
to challenge the neglect of human welfare;
to overturn the repression of budding forms of life
in emerging and neglected groups of people,
and show how the liberated life prevails now and always.
We ask help to do this through Jesus Christ.
until we gather again.*

*all: **Amen***

The Blessing

*presider: Kia whakapaingia koutou e te Atua kaha rawa,
e te Matua, e te Tamaiti ✠ e te Wairua Tapu.*

*all: **Amene***

*leader: The Mass has ended, let's go in peace
to love and serve our GOD. Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*all: **Thanks be to GOD. Alleluia! Alleluia!***