



# Celebrate

Fourth Sunday of Easter  
May 11, 2025

*The gift of new life, of eternal life, is the gift of the risen Christ. It is the promise of Jesus. It was true for Dorcas in Joppa. It was true for those “who have come out of the great ordeal” in the Revelation vision. It is true for us and for all the baptized: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

## Prayer of the Day

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O God of peace, you brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep. By the blood of your eternal covenant, make us complete in everything good that we may do your will, and work among us all that is well-pleasing in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## First Reading

Acts 9:36-43

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*Dorcas was a faithful and devoted woman of charity in the community of Joppa. Her kindness and her work with clothing were well-known, especially to the widows in town. When she fell ill and died, Peter raised her back to life through the power of prayer.*

Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. <sup>37</sup>At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. <sup>38</sup>Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, “Please come to us without delay.” <sup>39</sup>So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics

and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. <sup>40</sup>Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, “Tabitha, get up.” Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. <sup>41</sup>He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. <sup>42</sup>This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. <sup>43</sup>Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.



The LORD is my shep-herd; I shall not be in want.

The LORD <sup>1</sup> is my shepherd;  
I shall not <sup>1</sup> be in want.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD makes me lie down <sup>1</sup> in green pastures  
and leads me be- <sup>1</sup> side still waters.

<sup>3</sup> You restore my <sup>1</sup> soul, O LORD,  
and guide me along right pathways <sup>1</sup> for your name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I shall <sup>1</sup> fear no evil;

for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they <sup>1</sup> comfort me. **R**

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence <sup>1</sup> of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is <sup>1</sup> running over.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days <sup>1</sup> of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the <sup>1</sup> LORD forever. **R**

*Christ is the shepherd who leads his faithful to springs of the water of life. Christ is also the lamb who vanquishes sin and suffering.*

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

“Salvation belongs to our God  
who is seated on the throne,  
and to the Lamb!”

<sup>11</sup> And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> singing,

“Amen! Blessing and glory and  
wisdom  
and thanksgiving and honor  
and power and might  
be to our God forever and ever!  
Amen.”

<sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, robed

in white, and where have they come from?” <sup>14</sup> I said to him, “Sir, you are the one that knows.” Then he said to me, “These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup> For this reason they are before the throne of God,  
and worship him day and night  
within his temple,  
and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

<sup>16</sup> They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;  
the sun will not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat;

<sup>17</sup> for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

## Gospel

## John 10:22-30

*Jesus responds to questions about his identity with the remarkable claim that he and the Father are one. Those who understand this are his sheep; they hear his voice, follow, and will never be snatched from his hand.*

At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. <sup>24</sup> So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” <sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, “I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name testify to me; <sup>26</sup> but you

do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup> The Father and I are one.”

# Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

You guide your people to the waters of life. Make your church a nourishing place for all who are thirsty for hope and healing. Renew us in the waters of baptism, and send us forth as signs of your love. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

You tend to the earth, sustaining life in all places. Revive fragile ecosystems and restore species in danger of extinction. Teach us new ways of living in balance and harmony with our non-human neighbors. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

You lead all peoples along right pathways. Grant wisdom and compassion to judges, lawyers, mediators, and legal advocates. Dismantle systems of mass incarceration, empower processes of restorative justice, and encourage all who strive for healing in our communities. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

You wipe the tears from every eye. Tend to all who struggle with anxiety or depression, loneliness, or despair. Enfold all who are in any need in your shepherding care (*especially*). Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

This Mother's Day, bless mothers, grandmothers, and all who offer mothering care. Come close to those whose relationships with their families are difficult, and console all who grieve the loss of mother figures or the loss of children. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

You are the source of everlasting life. In deep gratitude for all your saints (*especially*), we rejoice in the joy and hope of the resurrection made known to us in Jesus, your beloved child. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.  
**Amen.**

## Preparing for Next Week

**Monday** Psalm 100. **Tuesday** Acts 9:32-35. **Wednesday** (Matthias, Apostle) Luke 6:12-16. **Thursday** Psalm 148. **Friday** Daniel 7:13-14. **Saturday** Revelation 11:16-19. **Fifth Sunday of Easter** (commemoration of Erik, King of Sweden, martyr, 1160) Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1-6; John 13:31-35.

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