



Sixth Sunday of Easter – May 17, 2020

[Father Erickson's video](#)

As we get further and further away from Easter Sunday, we remember that we are still in the Easter season and are mentally and spiritually preparing for Pentecost. The Church in her wisdom is trying to prepare us through the readings this Sunday. In this in between time and in these uncertain circumstances we might be asking ourselves, like the early Christians, “What do we do now?” What do we do with this Easter joy? Should I really talk to my neighbor about Jesus? And if so, how? Remember to continually ask these questions in your prayer time and be open to the answers.

Within these passages for each Sunday's Mass there are endless things that can be dove into, but each week we will dive into only a couple of these themes. The three main themes this week are preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ, confidence in the Advocate to be ready to preach and giving back to the Lord what he is asking. If these things interest you, we invite you to dive even deeper into a more thorough Bible study in the future. We will put some of the extra information in the footnotes if you want to go further.

Reading 1 [Acts 8:5-8, 14-17](#)

In this passage we see a newly ordained Deacon preaching in a land that had already rejected Jesus himself (Luke 9:15-16). We also see, as Father mentioned in the video, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the sacraments of the Holy Spirit. Phillip, this new Deacon, goes to Samaria to preach “the Christ” to the people there and not only listen to his teaching, but they are converted. Then, because of the success of Phillip the church leaders and Bishops of the early church, Peter and John, went to lay hands on them, so they might “receive the Holy Spirit”.¹

Samaria was a not only a land, but a people that had fallen away from their Jewish roots. They had kept some of the Jewish traditions, but for the most part they had fallen away from the faith. We even see in the passage that is sandwiched between todays reading, they had believed in a false prophet and “magic” man ([Acts 8:9-13](#)).

¹ Video from Bishop Barron on Confirmation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-UuMAU7qT0>

Diving Deeper

1. Phillip is really venturing out when he goes to Samaria. These people were not liked by the Jews from Jerusalem and had already rejected Jesus himself. We see in the Gospel of [Luke 10:25-37](#) one of the most well know parables (the Good Samaritan) of Jesus and it is about a Samaritan. In that parable Jesus shows that our neighbor is the one who shows mercy and compassion. The early Christians could have kept the Gospel message to themselves, but we see in Phillip an act of Mercy and Love for the people of Samaria. Go through the list of the often times forgotten [Spiritual works for mercy](#). Which of them do you find easy? Why? Which of them do you find difficult? Why? Ask the Holy Spirit to be an advocate for you when they are difficult.

2. When talking to others about Jesus or the Catholic Church we can often times get into the rules and theological details that the other person disagrees with before we get to the heart of the matter. Jesus got to the heart of the matter with his disciples when he asked them, “Who do you say that I am?” Phillip got to the heart of the matter with the Samaritans. He proclaimed “The Christ” to them. We see the same thing with St. Paul in [1 Corinthians 1:23-30](#). Again, thinking about the spiritual works of mercy, how do you approach talking to someone about the faith? Does it quickly get lost in the details? Think about what is most important. How can you convey that first and work from there?

