

**The Fifth Sunday of Easter  
Heroes' Sunday  
May 18, 2025**

**The Celebrant:** The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw  
**Assisting:** The Rev. Fr. Daren E. Evans and The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins  
**Homilist:** Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Jeffrey Thompson  
**Seminarian:** Kathryn Brossa  
**Verger:** Karen Ragland  
**Music Ministry:** St. Thomas Chancel Choir

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**Order of Service**

**The Prelude**

St. Thomas Music Ministry

**The Opening Hymn- "Guide My Feet"**

**1) Guide my feet while I run this race;  
guide my feet while I run this race;  
guide my feet while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!**

**2) Hold my hand while I run this race;  
hold my hand while I run this race;  
hold my hand while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!**

**3) Stand by me while I run this race;  
stand by me while I run this race;  
stand by me while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!**

**4) I'm your child while I run this race;  
I'm your child while I run this race;  
I'm your child while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!**

**A Word of Welcome**

The Celebrant

**The Opening Salutation**

**The Celebrant:** Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

**The People:** "He is Risen indeed, Alleluia!"

**The Collect for Purity**

**Book of Common Prayer (BCP)355**

**The Celebrant:** Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known and from you no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we

may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your Holy Name; through Christ our Lord.  
**AMEN.**

### **The Gloria in excelsis**

#### **The Celebrant and The People**

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. AMEN.**

### **The Proclamation of the Word**

#### **The Collect of the Day**

**The Celebrant:** The Lord be with you.

**The People:** And also, with you.

**The Celebrant:** Let us pray

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**AMEN.**

#### **The First Reading: Acts 11:1-18**

Lt. Robert McNeal, Philadelphia Fire Department

#### **A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles.**

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" When they heard

this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

**The Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

**The People:** Thanks be to God.

**Psalms 148**

Sharon Bullock, Former Philadelphia Police Officer

Hallelujah!

Praise the LORD from the heavens; \*  
**praise him in the heights.**

Praise him, all you angels of his; \*  
**praise him, all his host.**

Praise him, sun and moon; \*  
**praise him, all you shining stars.**

Praise him, heaven of heavens, \*  
**and you waters above the heavens.**

Let them praise the Name of the LORD; \*  
**for he commanded, and they were created.**

He made them stand fast for ever and ever; \*  
**he gave them a law which shall not pass away.**

Praise the LORD from the earth, \*  
**you sea-monsters and all deeps;**

Fire and hail, snow and fog, \*  
**tempestuous wind, doing his will;**

Mountains and all hills, \*  
**fruit trees and all cedars;**

Wild beasts and all cattle, \*  
**creeping things and winged birds;**

Kings of the earth and all peoples, \*  
**princes and all rulers of the world;**

Young men and maidens, \*  
**old and young together.**

Let them praise the Name of the LORD, \*  
**for his Name only is exalted,  
his splendor is over earth and heaven.**

He has raised up strength for his people  
and praise for all his loyal servants, \*  
**the children of Israel, a people who are near him.**  
**Hallelujah!**

**The Second Reading: Revelation 21:1-6**

The Venerable Phil Geliebter, TSSF

Archdeacon - Diocese of PA; Chaplain, Philadelphia Fire Department

**A Reading from the Book of Revelation.**

I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life."

**The Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

**The People:** Thanks be to God.

**The Gradual Hymn- "We'll Understand it Better By and By"**

Lift Every Voice and Sing (LEVAS) #207 (vv. 1-2)

**1) We are often tossed and driv'n on the restless sea of time,  
Somber skies and howling tempest oft succeed a bright sunshine;  
In that land of perfect day, when the mists have rolled away,  
We will understand it better by and by. [Chorus]**

**Chorus: By and by when the morning comes, when the saints of  
God are gathered home; we'll tell the story how we're overcome;  
For we'll understand it better by and by.**

**2) We are often destitute of the things that life demands, w  
ant of food and want of shelter thirsty hills and barren lands;  
We are trusting in the Lord, and according to His word,  
We will understand it better by and by. [Chorus]**

**The Holy Gospel: John 13:31-35**

Fr. Evans

**The Priest:** The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**The People:** Glory to you, Lord Christ.

At the last supper, when Judas had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little

longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

**The Priest:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**The People:** Praise to you, Lord Christ.

**The Homily Hymn- "We'll Understand it Better by and By"** LEVAS # 207 (vv. 3-4)

3) Trials dark on every hand, and we cannot understand,  
All the ways that God would lead us to that blessed promised land;  
But He guides us with His eye, and we'll follow till we die,  
for we'll understand it better by and by. [Chorus]

**Chorus:** By and by when the morning comes, when the saints of  
God are gathered home; we'll tell the story how we're overcome;  
For we'll understand it better by and by.

4) Temptations hidden snares often take us unawares,  
and our hearts are made to bleed for many a thoughtless word or deed;  
and we wonder why the test when we try to do our best,  
but we'll understand it better by and by. [Chorus]

**The Homily**

Jeffrey Thompson, Philadelphia Fire Commissioner

**The Call to Christian Discipleship**

The Celebrant

**The Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate  
from the Virgin Mary and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;  
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the Prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. AMEN.**

**The Prayers of the People**

Jeffrey Chapman, Assistant V.P. of Public Safety,  
LaSalle University

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;  
**That we all may be one.**

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;  
**That your Name may be glorified by all people.**

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;  
**That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.**

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;  
**That there may be justice and peace on the earth.**

We pray for all first responders, active and retired, and their families;  
**That they may be safe in their service and secure in your protection.**

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;  
**That our works may find favor in your sight.**

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;  
**That they may be delivered from their distress.**

Protect those who seek to protect others;  
**May they find strength in your mercy and grace.**

We pray for all first responders; those who bind up the wounded, rescue the helpless, and protect those in harm's way, choosing to stand in the breach and lead others to safety;  
**That they may be preserved in safety themselves, and upheld by your mercy, grace, and love.**

Give to the departed eternal rest;  
**Let light perpetual shine upon them.**

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;  
**May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.**

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

## **The Concluding Collect**

The Celebrant

## **The Confession**

BCP 360

**The Celebrant:** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us kneel and confess our sins against God and our neighbor.  
(Silence is kept)

## **The Celebrant and The People:**

**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. AMEN.**

## **The Absolution**

The Celebrant

**Almighty God, have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. AMEN.**

## **The Peace**

**The Celebrant:** The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**The People:** And, also with you.

## **The Holy Eucharist**

### **The Offertory Sentence and Offering**

### **The Offertory Selection**

St. Thomas Chancel Choir

## **The Great Thanksgiving**

**The Celebrant:** The Lord be with you.

**The People:** And also, with you.

**The Celebrant:** Lift up your hearts.

**The People:** We lift them to the Lord.

**The Celebrant:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**The People:** It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

For you are the source of light and life; you made us in your image and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore, we praise you, joining with Angels and Archangels and all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**The Sanctus (Sung)**

**The Celebrant and the People:**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**The Celebrant:** Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night He was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper He took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, He gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**The Memorial Acclamation (Sung)**

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

**The Celebrant:** We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is your, Almighty Father, now and forever.

**AMEN.**



### **The Lord's Prayer (Sung)**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive  
us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into  
temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the  
glory, forever and ever. AMEN.**

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

**The Celebrant:** Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed.

**The People:** Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

### **The Agnus Dei (Sung)**

**The Celebrant:** Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

**The People:** Have mercy upon us.

**The Celebrant:** Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

**The People:** Have mercy upon us.

**The Celebrant:** Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

**The People:** Grant us thy peace.

### **The Prayer of Humble Access**

**Let us pray: We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not  
worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord,  
whose property is always to have mercy; Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the  
flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be  
made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that  
we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. AMEN.**

**The Celebrant:** The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ  
died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

### **The Distribution of Communion**

#### **The Post-Communion Prayer**

**The Celebrant and the People:**

**Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your  
Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of  
his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace and grant us strength and  
courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our  
Lord. AMEN.**

## **Sending Forth of the Lay Eucharistic Visitors**

**The Celebrant:** In the healing name of Jesus and with the compassionate embrace of this parish family, I send you forth bearing these Holy Gifts to those to whom you go today, so that they may share with us in the Communion of Christ's Body and Blood.

**The People:** We who are many are one body, and we all share one bread and one cup.

**The Announcements**

Richard Jones, Rector's Warden

**Presentations and Acknowledgements**

Seth Williams and Albert Dandridge, Esq.

**The Recognition of Visitors and Guests**

**The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel**

**The Final Blessing/Benediction**

The Celebrant

**The Closing Hymn- "Stand By Me"**

LEVAS # 200

**1) When the storms of life are raging, stand by me, stand by me.  
When the storms of life are raging, stand by me, stand by me.  
When the world is tossing me like a ship upon the sea;  
Thou who rulest wind and water, stand by me, stand by me.**

**2) In the midst of tribulations, stand by me, stand by me.  
In the midst of tribulations, stand by me, stand by me.  
When the hosts of hell assail, and my strength begins to fail,  
Thou who never lost a battle, stand by me, stand by me.**

**3) In the midst of faults and failures, stand by me, stand by me.  
In the midst of faults and failures, stand by me, stand by me.  
When I do the best I can, and my friends misunderstand,  
Thou who knowest all about me, stand by me, stand by me.**

**4) In the midst of persecution, stand by me, stand by me.  
In the midst of persecution, stand by me, stand by me.  
When my foes in battle array under take to stop my way,  
Thou who saved Paul and Silas, stand by me, stand by me.**

**5) When I'm growing old and feeble, stand by me.  
When I'm growing old and feeble, stand by me.  
When my life becomes a burden, and I'm nearing chilly Jordan,  
O thou "Lilly of the Valley." stand by me.**

**The Dismissal**

### **The Blessing/Benediction**

During Sundays of Easter, the Celebrant will offer the Blessing with the Blessed Sacrament (The Body of Jesus). When the Monstrance is lifted, the practice of the church is to reverently make the sign of the Cross.

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This is a reminder that the Mass (service) ends following the Closing Hymn and Dismissal. Please make an extra effort to refrain from unnecessary chatter and departure from the Service before the conclusion. This request is being made to respect all gathered wishing to embrace the fullness of worship.

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*The reception in Anderson Hall, following the service, is sponsored by Seth Williams and Edwin Santana.*