



Monday of the 7th Week of Easter



Date: Monday, June 2, 2025 | **Season:** Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Acts 19:1–8

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 68:2–3b, 4–5a, 5c–7b | **Response:** Psalm 68:33a

Gospel Acclamation: Colossians 3:1

Gospel Reading: John 16:29–33

Preached at: the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House in the Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia.

I imagine encountering a stranger who knows only half your story. That's where the first disciples in Ephesus found themselves. They had begun the journey—but the fullness of the Christian life had not yet reached them. In a way, their situation mirrors our own, just a day after celebrating the Ascension. Christ has risen, He has ascended, and yet, like them, we are still waiting for the Spirit to fall afresh. Still needing the Breath that makes all things new.

Today's readings draw us into these liminal spaces—moments of encounter where faith shifts from surface to depth, from intention to indwelling. We meet believers in transition: from partial understanding to fullness, from human confusion to divine courage. And in them, we recognise our own journey—unfinished, unfolding, always being drawn deeper into the mystery of Christ.

In Acts, Paul meets disciples who had received only the baptism of John—a baptism of repentance. Their hearts were sincere, but something was missing. They had turned away from sin, yes—but they had not yet been filled with the fire of the Spirit. When Paul lays hands on them, the Spirit comes, and suddenly, they are speaking new languages, proclaiming new life. This is no private experience—it is a public transformation. It reminds us that the Christian life is not merely about turning from sin, but about turning into something new. The Spirit does not come as a quiet guest, but as breath, fire, wind. He completes what was lacking.

This moment sits perfectly between Easter and Pentecost. Yesterday, we celebrated the Ascension—the Risen Lord returning to the Father, not to leave us abandoned, but to prepare us to receive power from on high. And now, like those early disciples, we stand in the upper room of our own hearts, waiting. Not idle, but expectant. The Holy Spirit is not an optional extra. She is the flame in our conviction, the breath behind our boldness, the light that shapes our discernment. St Ignatius taught us to find God in all things, and especially in those places where we feel our poverty, our lack, our ache for more. The Spirit meets us not where we have everything, but precisely where we don't.

Psalm 68 gives us words to sing in that waiting. “Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.” Even before the Spirit arrives in fire, the Psalmist dares to rejoice—because God reigns now. This is not a song of naïve optimism, but of defiant hope. Here in Zambia, amidst the struggle for equity in education, the strain on our hospitals, the dignity battles of everyday life—this Psalm is our anthem. God is not a distant observer of suffering. He is the God who walks with us, lifts us, sings over us.

And in the Gospel, we find Jesus in His final discourse. The disciples claim to understand: “Now we believe,” they say. But Jesus, with tender honesty, tells them they don't yet see the whole picture. Their faith will be tested. They will scatter. They will fall silent. But still, He says, “Take courage. I have conquered the world.” Not I will. I have. The victory has already been secured—before the Cross, through the Cross, beyond the Cross. And that same assurance holds for us.

How often we feel scattered—by news, by grief, by fear of the future. But Christ says to us what He said to them: the outcome is not in question. The tomb is empty. The Spirit is coming. And in this space between Ascension and Pentecost, we are not abandoned—we are being prepared.

Today, we honour Saints Marcellinus and Peter, who knew what it meant to live in that tension. Martyred for their faith, they bore witness in silence and suffering to the power of a victory the world could not see. Despite facing persecution and death, they remained steadfast in their belief that Christ had conquered death, a victory they were willing to die for. They did not wait for perfect conditions. They lived the Gospel in imperfect ones. Their courage calls us to the same.

So today, let us ask:

- Where is my faith still waiting to be completed by the Spirit?
- Am I living as though Christ has truly conquered the world—or am I still living as if the outcome depends on me?
- How might I become a witness of that victory today—in my family, in my classroom, on the minibus, or in the quiet space of prayer?

And this week, as we wait with the Church for Pentecost, let us each choose one way to embody the risen, ascended Christ: through an act of generosity, a word of encouragement, or a renewed openness to the Holy Spirit's whisper.

May the Spirit who filled the Church in Ephesus breathe again into our hearts—and may we live as Easter people: Spirit-filled, hopeful, and ready to bear witness to a victory already won.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-06jun-02-yc-et-07/>

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today's readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.