

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER, 7th MAY 2023

FIRST READING: Acts 7:55-60 The death of Stephen (NIVUK)

⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ 'Look,' he said, 'I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.' ⁵⁷ At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, ⁵⁸ dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' ⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he fell asleep.

PSALM 31:1-5,15,16

¹ In you, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. ² Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me. ³ Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. ⁴ Keep me free from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge. ⁵ Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me, LORD, my faithful God. ¹⁵ My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies, from those who pursue me. ¹⁶ Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:2-10 God's chosen people, a royal priesthood (NIVUK)

² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴ As you come to him, the living Stone – rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him – ⁵ you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house^[a] to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For in Scripture it says: 'See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.'^[b] ⁷ Now to you who believe, this

stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,’^[c] ⁸ and, ‘A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.’^[d] They stumble because they disobey the message – which is also what they were destined for. ⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

GOSPEL: John 14:1-14 Jesus the way to the Father (NIVUK)

¹⁴ ‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God^[a]; believe also in me. ² My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going.’ ⁵ Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?’ ⁶ Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know^[b] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.’ ⁸ Philip said, ‘Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.’ ⁹ Jesus answered: ‘Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, “Show us the Father”? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.