

Fifth Sunday of Easter Sunday, May 10, 2020

The Collect: 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.

First Lesson: Acts 7:55-60 read from the Revised Standard Version Bible

55 But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; 56 and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." 57 But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. 58 Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame; *
deliver me in your righteousness.

2 Incline your ear to me; *
make haste to deliver me.

3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold; *
for the sake of your Name, lead me and guide me.

4 Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, *
for you are my tower of strength.

5 Into your hands I commend my spirit, *

for you have redeemed me,

O Lord, O God of truth.

15 My times are in your hand; *

rescue me from the hand of my enemies,

and from those who persecute me.

16 Make your face to shine upon your servant, *

and in your loving-kindness save me."

Epistle: 1 Peter 2:2-10 read from the American Standard Version Bible

2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in Scripture:

"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,

a cornerstone chosen and precious,

and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

7 So the honour is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

"The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone",

8 and

"A stone of stumbling,

and a rock of offense."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people;

once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: John 14:1-14 read from the Douay-Rheims Bible

14 Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you: because I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I shall go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to myself; that where I am, you also may be.

4 And whither I go you know, and the way you know.

5 Thomas saith to him: Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith to him: I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me.

7 If you had known me, you would without doubt have known my Father also: and from henceforth you shall know him, and you have seen him.

8 Philip saith to him: Lord, shew us the Father, and it is enough for us.

9 Jesus saith to him: Have I been so long a time with you; and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, shew us the Father?

10 Do you not believe, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of myself. But the Father who abideth in me, he doth the works.

11 Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?

12 Otherwise believe for the very works' sake. Amen, amen I say to you, he that believeth in me, the works that I do, he also shall do; and greater than these shall he do.

13 Because I go to the Father: and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do: that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If you shall ask me any thing in my name, that I will do.

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On May 17th we remember William Hobart Hare, Bishop of Niobrara and of South Dakota. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

William Hobart Hare was born on May 17th, 1838, in Princeton, New Jersey, the grandson of Bishop John Henry Hobart. Although he studied at the University of Pennsylvania, he never received a degree and prepared for ordination without attending seminary. He was ordained to the diaconate in 1859 and to the priesthood in 1862. He served St. Luke's and St. Paul's, Chestnut Hill, both in Philadelphia.

He moved to Minnesota in 1863 with the hope that a different climate would improve his wife's failing health. It was there that he first came into contact with Native Americans, an encounter that would change his life and shape his vocation. Hare returned to Philadelphia in 1867 to become the Rector of the Church of the Ascension, but his personal interest in the church's ministry among Native Americans never waned.

In 1871, the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church created the Missionary District of Niobrara encompassing much of the Dakotas. A year later, the House of Bishops elected Hare to become the Bishop of Niobrara, and he was ordained to the episcopate on January 9th, 1873.

Bishop Hare, often referred to as "The Apostle to the Sioux," devoted himself to work among the Native Americans in the vast expanse of the Niobrara Territory. Well ahead of his time in his approach to mission work, Hare believed it was important to honor as much of the tradition and culture of the people as possible. His desire was not to destroy the fabric of Sioux culture, but to bring the gospel into the midst of it so that the people could also come to know Jesus. Instead of suppressing the customs of the people, he saw them as vessels that could communicate God's grace.

In 1883, the House of Bishops divided the Missionary District of Niobrara into the districts of North and South Dakota. Bishop Hare from that point took responsibility for what would become the Diocese of South Dakota. He worked vigorously to ensure that the Native Americans in his area of care had access to education and healthcare. By his initiative, the number of native catechists and clergy grew greatly. By the end of his life, over half of the

Native Americans in South Dakota were Episcopalians, with Hare having confirmed over 7,000 of them. The Niobrara deanery became a site of gathering for Episcopalian Native Americans across the Great Plains that continues to this day. Hare died on October 23rd, 1909.

Let us pray: Holy God, you called your servant William Hobart Hare to proclaim the means of grace and the hope of glory to the peoples of the Great Plains: We give you thanks for the devotion of those who received the Good News gladly, and for the faithfulness of the generations who have succeeded them. Strengthen us with your Holy Spirit, that we may walk in their footsteps and lead many to faith in Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**