

## MONDAY

4 MAY

Acts 11:1-18  
 Psalm 42:1-2;  
 43:1-4  
 John 10:1-10  
 (or 11-18)

## TUESDAY

5 MAY

Acts 11:19-26  
 Psalm 87  
 John 10:22-30

## WEDNESDAY

6 MAY

Acts 12:24 – 13:5  
 Psalm 67  
 John 12:44-end

## THURSDAY

7 MAY

Acts 13:13-25  
 Psalm 89:1-2.  
 20-26  
 John 13:16-20

## FRIDAY

8 MAY

Acts 13:26-33  
 Psalm 2  
 John 14:1-6

## SATURDAY

9 MAY

Acts 13:44-end  
 Psalm 98:1-5  
 John 14:7-14

## REFLECTION

As the first Christians begin to send out preaching missions around the Mediterranean, so the focus for us can be the one about whom they spoke. In this week's Gospel readings the image of shepherding is to the fore. Jesus is the good shepherd, the one who doesn't drive the sheep with dogs and a stick, but leads them and keeps them safe. This shepherd comes "not to judge the world, but to save the world", to "prepare a place... so that where I am, there you may be also".



As the Acts of the Apostles records how many Gentiles began to be included in the Church and in the kingdom of God, so the Gospel of John speaks of the loving care that brings about our inclusion, too. God's offer is of inclusion through love not fear, and the requirement is that we do the same generous work that Jesus did – welcoming everyone, so that God is known. That's a big task. It's so much easier to put up a wall to keep people out, than to make a bigger table so that all may eat of the bread of life.

## PRAYER

Jesus, our Good Shepherd,  
 when we want to keep out others,  
 give us the vision of Peter,  
 who was shown that what God has made clean  
 we must not call profane.  
 Help us to build a longer table and not a higher wall,  
 so that all our sisters and brothers may eat of the  
 bread of life.

## GODPARENTING

PART II –  
THE IDEAL GODPARENT

For cinema goers the term "godfather" may summon an image of Vito Corleone as played by Marlon Brando in *The Godfather*. Of course nobody in their right mind wants a controlling mafia boss exerting an influence on their child. Disney fans, on the other hand, may call to mind the Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella*, waving her wand and turning a pumpkin into an elegant carriage, and rags into a glamorous ballgown. Fantasy though it is, it's not uncommon for parents to choose godparents they think can wave a magic wand. They may approach, for example, someone they consider well off or well connected. Yet godparenting is a deep, life-long commitment that involves far more than waving a wand.

Sadly it's common for godparents to lose touch with their godchildren. A well-known parenting website contains an interesting discussion thread that illustrates this. One mother writes: "I don't really know my own godparents. They were my parents' best friends in their late twenties. Forty years later life changes and time mean they aren't." Someone else chips in: "I haven't seen some of my children's godparents for years, they were very good friends at the time though!" Someone else makes a case for choosing an unrelated godparent: "I want my kids' godparents to broaden my kids' understanding of life, from outside the family."

So the ideal godparent could be said to be someone who will broaden and enrich their godchild's outlook, while remaining constant and committed to their responsibilities. Not only is godparenting a commitment to a godchild but also, importantly, to a friendship with their parents. Over the normal course of a life we often drift away from friends, either through distance or difference, and simply move on. A good godparent, on the other hand, needs to be prepared to iron out differences, dig deep to find forgiveness, and keep a long-distance friendship going, sometimes even across continents. It is both a wonderful and daunting truth that godparenting creates a bond that needs to be sustained, not just for the spiritual well-being of the godchild, but for everybody concerned.

LIVE  
the WORDSUSTAINING YOU  
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by  
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 and  
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Fourth week of Easter

Monday 4 May to  
 Saturday 9 May  
 2020

WEEK

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