



Come and See!

Week of May 31, 2026

The Word...

*“Brothers and sisters, rejoice, be restored, be encouraged,
be of the same mind, be at peace,
and the God of love and peace will be with you.
Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the holy ones greet you.
The grace of the Lord Jesus the Anointed and the love of God and the
community of the Holy Spirit be with all of you”
(2 Cor 13:11-13, Greek, translation by D. B. Hart).*

Pondering the Word ...

Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians is quite personal. A series of misunderstandings have occurred in Corinth since Paul first evangelized there, and this letter goes back and forth between Paul defending himself and apologizing for what the people perceived as his lack of sincerity and attention. Of course, there’s the requisite admonishment and dramatic flair typical of Paul’s writings, his own admission of his weaknesses and where he has failed, and a few subtle references to where the community has not lived up to its promises.

But it ends with these lovely parting instructions given in the name of the Trinity, written, not as a warning, but in fellowship and faith...words that we can take to heart today.

Living the Word...

Let’s take each word or phrase to see how we can make this passage real for us: *“Rejoice.”* If you are struggling to be joyful these days, try starting with gratitude. Gratitude for another day to love. Gratitude for sun and rain. Gratitude for the gift of the Holy Spirit that empowers us to love. *“Be restored.”* Wow, this is a good one. What things restore you? Being in nature or with those you love? Reading a good book? Sitting quietly in a sanctuary? Having someone hide your phone for a day? Give yourself the gift of restoration today.

“Be encouraged.” Create a circle of friends who get together to encourage each other. Tell others the giftedness you see in them. Log on to <https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/> to hear of good things happening in the world. *“Be of the same mind, be at peace.”* Well, this might be a tough one if you are at odds within your family or community due to political or philosophical differences. So, focus more on the second phrase—*be at peace*. Agree to disagree but try to eliminate conflict and greet each other in love—even with *“a holy kiss”* if that’s appropriate! Because *“the holy ones”*—the communion of saints—those who have gone before us, all the poor, the downtrodden, all God’s children greet you with a prayer for your welfare and your peace!

*“The amazing grace of the Master, Jesus Christ, the extravagant love of God,
the intimate friendship of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you! (The Message translation, emphasis added).*

Personal Reflections and Ideas ...

Mon, Jun 1: *“(The) tenants said, “This is the heir... let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours” (Mk 12:1-12).* Man, these tenant farmers are really brazen! There’s a saying in legal circles, “Possession is 9/10 of the law,” and I guess these guys see it that way. But they’ve been getting away with murder—literally—all along, beating and killing the servants who came before the heir. They’ve not been punished so are emboldened and see the vineyard as theirs to profit from and do with as they please. It is their “kingdom,” not God’s.

Provision: Beware of those who equate a worldly kingdom with God’s kingdom.

Tue, Jun 2: *“You, therefore, beloved ones, knowing this beforehand, be on guard so that you should not fall away from your own steadfastness by being led off along with the lawless in their straying” (2 Pt 3:12-15, 17-18, Greek).* Can you imagine how hard it was for the early Christians to discern which preachers were legit and which were “lawless?” We remember all the confusion about whether Gentiles were to follow Jewish laws (Acts 15). And the preachers who weren’t legit? Well, it doesn’t mean they were malicious or evil. Maybe they just didn’t have the whole story. This same thing happens today. **Provision: “Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.”** Wow, is this quote from today’s gospel ever pertinent in the US! Let’s make sure we do not follow the tenant farmers from yesterday’s gospel who confuse the Kingdom of God with their own lust for power and kingship. Always go back to your informed conscience and Jesus’ words: if exclusion or hate are being preached, it is not of God. Don’t allow yourself to be “greatly misled.”

Wed, Jun 3: *“He is not God of the dead but of the living. You are greatly misled” (Mk 12:18-27).* By what or whom have the Sadducees been misled? Is it “groupthink?” Have years of debate led to misinterpretation of God’s law? Has human need for control caused people to put things in neat little boxes, so much so that we ignore the mystery? **Provision: “I am the Way.”** *“Do not think I have come to abolish the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them” (Mt 5:17).* “Watch me. Observe the way I live, how I treat people, what I have to say about the powers that be. I am the God of the living. Don’t be misled. Follow me.”

Thu, Jun 4: *When Jesus saw that he answered with understanding, he said, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.” And no one dared to ask him any more questions (Mk 12:28-34).* I wonder how Jesus would have responded if he knew the people didn’t “dare ask him any more questions.” I think he would have been disappointed. I imagine those assembled didn’t want to ask or say anything “dumb.” They were probably scared to hear that they were NOT near the Kingdom! But even though Jesus could get testy when his close disciples didn’t seem to get the message, Jesus relished the opportunity to engage with people who came, not to trip him up, but to learn from him. **Provision: What questions do you have for Jesus?** Abraham Joshua Heschel says, *“We are closer to God when we are asking questions than when we think we have the answers.”* There are the existential questions we all have about the meaning of life, of evil, etc., whose answers are a mystery to us now, but what other questions might you want to ask Jesus about his life, his message? Bring those to prayer and listen.

Fri, Jun 5 *“The first of your words is truth” (Ps 119:160, Hebrew translation).* Oh, how often I feel like Pilate, *“What is truth?” (Jn 18:38).* It’s frightening today to know what is truth. We dig in our heels, unwilling to be open to the Spirit’s newness for fear we will be led astray. It is wise to be cautious; charlatans abound! But to answer the question: Truth is love. Merciful, unconditional love. **Provision: Set your sights on love.** From the broken-record department: any talk or actions that are not of love are not of God. Be guided by the law of love.

Sat, Jun 6: *A poor widow put in two small coins. “Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more; she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had” (Mk 12: 38-44).* We’ve talked about this reading before and what it means to give from “our poverty.” How we define that today might be very different from how we defined it a few years ago. For some, it may be true financial poverty due to the economy or job loss. And the deeper I get into Jesus’ words, the more reluctant I am to even compare my own spiritual or emotional poverty to those who struggle to put food on the table. But we are called where we are, so... **Provision: What is “your poverty,” and how are you to give from it?** I know people suffering from their own grief who comfort others in grief, cancer patients who encourage others who suffer from the disease. These are wounded healers. Caregivers, teachers, counselors, clergy who give out of their own poverty to ease the pain of others. Perhaps you are low on hope these days. I promise you: you can replenish your own hope by reaching out to others who need hope.