## Sunday, May 12, 2019Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year C

### Introduction

The gift of new life, of eternal life, is the gift of the risen Christ. It is the promise of Jesus. It was true for Dorcas in Joppa. It was true for those “who have come out of the great ordeal” in the Revelation vision. It is true for us and for all the baptized: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

### Prayer of the Day

O God of peace, you brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep. By the blood of your eternal covenant, make us complete in everything good that we may do your will, and work among us all that is well-pleasing in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Jesus says, I am | the good shepherd.\* I know my own and my | own know me. Alleluia. (John 10:14)

### Readings and Psalm

[**Acts 9:36-43**](https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2019-5-12/0)

Peter raises Tabitha/Dorcas from the dead

[**Psalm 23**](https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2019-5-12/0)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. (Ps. 23:1)

[**Revelation 7:9-17**](https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2019-5-12/0)

A white-robed multitude sings before the Lamb

[**John 10:22-30**](https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources/2019-5-12/0)

Jesus promises eternal life to his sheep

### First Reading: Acts 9:36-43

Dorcas was a faithful and devoted woman of charity in the community of Joppa. Her kindness and her work with clothing was well-known, especially to the widows in town. When she fell ill and died, Peter raised her back to life through the power of prayer.

36Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. 37At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. 38Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, “Please come to us without delay.” 39So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. 40Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, “Tabitha, get up.” Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. 41He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. 42This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. 43Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

### Psalm: Psalm 23

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.*(Ps. 23:1)

 1The Lord| is my shepherd;
  I shall not | be in want.
 2**The Lord makes me lie down | in green pastures**
  **and leads me be- | side still waters.**
 3You restore my | soul, O Lord,
  and guide me along right pathways | for your name’s sake.
 4**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall | fear no evil;**
  **for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they | comfort me. R**
 5You prepare a table before me in the presence | of my enemies;
  you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is | running over.
 6**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days | of my life,**
  **and I will dwell in the house of the | Lord forever. R**

### Second Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

Christ is the shepherd who leads his faithful to springs of the water of life. Christ is also the lamb who vanquishes sin and suffering, in whose blood the saints have washed their robes and made them white.

9After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10They cried out in a loud voice, saying,
 “Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”
11And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12singing,
 “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
 and thanksgiving and honor
 and power and might
 be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”
  13Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?” 14I said to him, “Sir, you are the one that knows.” Then he said to me, “These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
 15For this reason they are before the throne of God,
  and worship him day and night within his temple,
  and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.
 16They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
  the sun will not strike them,
  nor any scorching heat;
 17for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,
  and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,
 and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

### Gospel: John 10:22-30

Jesus responds to questions about his identity with the remarkable claim that he and the Father are one. Those who understand this are his sheep; they hear his voice, follow, and will never be snatched from his hand.

22At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, 23and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. 24So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” 25Jesus answered, “I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name testify to me; 26but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. 27My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. 28I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father’s hand. 30The Father and I are one.”

### Prayers of Intercession

*The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.*

Trusting God’s promise of new life, we pray for the renewal of the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

Shine your light through this and every congregation. Reveal to us the light of your salvation in places of hopelessness and decay. Anoint us and make us overflow with goodness and mercy. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks for gentle rains that nourish green pastures and rejuvenate rivers and streams. Provide clean water for thirsty people, animals, and crops. Heal places suffering destruction caused by floods, typhoons, storms, and mudslides. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Empower authorities to be faithful shepherds who lead nations in pathways of righteousness and peace (especially). Disrupt and deter the work of terrorists, religious and political extremists, and all who would choose the way of violence over the way of mercy. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Give strength and perseverance to those facing struggles of hunger or thirst, unemployment or homelessness, chronic illness or anxiety (especially). Be our never-failing voice of comfort through all the trials of this life. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Raise up faithful women as witnesses to your strength and compassion. Bless mothers and all who offer mothering care. Protect victims of sexism, abuse, and gender-based violence. Restore dignity to those marginalized because of their gender identity or sexual orientation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Salvation belongs to you, O God. You promise to wipe away every tear. Give us the assurance that all who live and die in you (especially) will rest forever beside the river of life. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God. Come near to us with your saving help, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

**Amen.**