

## MONDAY

9 MAY

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

## TUESDAY

10 MAY

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

## WEDNESDAY

11 MAY

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

## THURSDAY

12 MAY

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

## FRIDAY

13 MAY

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

## SATURDAY

14 MAY

Matthias the  
 Apostle  
 Isaiah 22:15-end  
 or Acts 1:15-end  
 Psalm 15  
 Acts 1:15-end or 1  
 Corinthians 4:1-7  
 John 15:9-17

## REFLECTION

It's a wonderful thing to watch a good pair of dancers. Their movement together has gone beyond thinking about each step: they move as one. Sometimes you get the same feeling when you see birds in flight – a formation of geese or a flock of starlings.

If you say of a long-married couple that they are “as one”, you mean they inhabit each other's thoughts and finish one another's sentences. Maybe they've come to look similar through years of mimicking each other's facial expressions.

Jesus means all this and more when he says, “The Father and I are one” in Tuesday's Gospel. A little later, in Friday's reading, he will say, “No one comes to the Father except through me.” It is an extraordinary claim. Jesus doesn't merely mean he is at one with God, but that the Father and he are intertwined.

And gifted from the Father and Son, we receive the Holy Spirit. The Spirit doesn't make us suddenly divine, but draws us into the union of the divine relationship. Try this prayer: “Fill me, Jesus, with your Spirit; teach me and lead me to move as one with you.”

## PRAYER

Risen Christ,  
 faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep,  
 teach us to hear your voice  
 and to follow your command,  
 that all your people may be gathered into one flock,  
 to the glory of God the Father.



## GREAT PREACHERS

PART III – JOHN DONNE  
(1572-1631)

The poet John Donne attended both Oxford and Cambridge and later studied law in London. As he came from a Roman Catholic family, he was unable to take the required oath to receive his degree. It was not his religion, however, which interrupted his career. Prison followed his secret marriage above his station, without the bride's father's permission. As he later wrote (in a rhyme which helps us pronounce his surname correctly): “John Donne, Anne Donne, Un-done.”

John and his wife depended heavily on the support of benefactors until King James I promised to advance his career if he would seek ordination. In 1615, Donne joined the Church of England.

Poetry took a back seat after ordination and Donne acquired a reputation as a great preacher, eventually becoming Dean of St Paul's, where people flocked to hear him preach the lengthy sermons typical of the age. (In his youth he had written cheekily that Puritans preached long sermons in the hope that eventually their listeners would wake up.)

Donne's listeners are unlikely to have fallen asleep. With a poet's command of imagery, he aimed to “preach consolation, preach peace, preach mercy”. Citing love as the key, Donne drew out the Gospel's message of hope.

For all his skill as a preacher, however, Donne believed in prayer above preaching. As he preached: “The Church is the house of prayer, so as that, upon occasion, preaching may be left out, but never a house of preaching, so as that prayer may be left out.”

Donne's best-known quote came from his poem “For Whom the Bell Tolls”. Donne recalled how from his sickbed he heard church bells ringing for funerals. While wondering who had died, he meditated on the inter-connectedness of all human beings:

“No man is an island, Entire of itself, Every man is a piece of the continent... Any man's death diminishes me, Because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bells tolls; it tolls for thee.”

LIVE  
the WORDSUSTAINING YOU  
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by  
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 and  
 Heather Smith



The John Donne Memorial, by Nigel Boonham, St Paul's Cathedral, London

Fourth week of Easter

Monday 9 May to  
 Saturday 14 May  
 2022

WEEK

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