



ANNUAL
CATHOLIC
APPEAL

BUILD MY CHURCH

Messengers of Hope

GUEST SPEAKER MANUAL & WORKBOOK



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

Critical Information

GUEST SPEAKER MANUAL

2025 ACA COMMUNICATIONS MESSAGE:

Messengers of Hope

As a guest speaker, you play a central role in inviting others to actively live their Catholic faith. Your presentation will inspire and motivate many people to support those in our community who rely on parishes, schools, and ministries in so many ways.

A special website has been created for the 2025 *Annual Catholic Appeal*. Invite people to visit aca.archstl.org to learn more about how the *Appeal* has impacted others. People can also use the QR code that is on all materials.

Thank you for speaking on behalf of those who will benefit from the *Appeal*.

YOUR TALK

To ensure that all parishioners hear a unified message, we ask that you keep the following requests in mind as you compose your talk.

- **Pray** — Say a prayer each time you open your workbook, rehearse or deliver your talk. Invoke the Holy Spirit and your patron saint or another saint to guide you.
- **Mention the 2025 focus** — *Messengers of Hope*.
- **No gift is too small** — Every gift is appreciated.
- **Mention the ACA website URL and QR code** — In addition to the case statement, the *Appeal* has a special promotional sheet that features the campaign website (aca.archstl.org) and the QR code. If any of those materials are present in the pews, you can even encourage people to give right then during your talk.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP WITH THIS IMPORTANT EFFORT!

***Critical note:** Pastors with multiple parishes or worship sites will request a single guest speaker. This helps to have a unified message to all their parishioners. If you are assigned to one of these parishes, please be ready to move between all the sites to speak to all the parishioners at every Mass.*

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Guest Speaker,

Thank you for giving of your time and talent to participate in our Guest Speaker Program.

The Guest Speaker Program is one of the single most effective ways to reach out to St. Louis Catholics, asking for their support of the *Annual Catholic Appeal*. Your help with this program will assist the ministries fulfilling the mission of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you for accepting this important responsibility.

THERE ARE FOUR SECTIONS IN THIS MANUAL

1. Coordinating with the parish
2. Preparing to write your talk
3. Writing your talk
4. Rehearsing your talk

If you are an accomplished, experienced public speaker, you will already know many of the things in this manual. We ask you to keep in mind that we are preparing this manual for people with different levels of experience.

FOUR CRUCIAL POINTS TO CONSIDER

1. Be brief (5 minutes at most)
2. Rehearse
3. Please do not read to the congregation
4. Speak loudly, clearly and from the heart

Following these four suggestions should greatly enhance your presentation.

We hope you find this manual to be helpful in preparing your speech. Should you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact the Office of Stewardship and the *Annual Catholic Appeal* at (314) 792-7680.

Gratefully,



Brian Niebrugge

Executive Director

Office of Stewardship and the Annual Catholic Appeal

COORDINATING WITH THE PARISH

Before you prepare your talk, please call the pastor at your assigned parish. He is expecting your call. When you speak with him, introduce yourself and ask the following questions.

1. I am scheduled to speak the weekend of:
2. What times are your Masses? *(For pastors with multiple parishes or worship sites, you should make sure to discuss the locations and logistics of speaking at all the sites.)*
3. Shall I help set out or clean up pew brochures?
4. How early would you like me to arrive?
5. During what part of the Mass will I speak?
6. Where will the pledge cards be available after Mass on my assigned weekend? *(Please ask for specifics.)*
7. Will the case statement or the QR Code information be available in the pews?
If so, would you like me to ask the parishioners to make a gift during my talk?
8. How is your parish most impacted by the Appeal? *(Your packet will have a list of any direct support the parish receives. If your assigned parish receives this support, ask the pastor about it.)*
9. How are you planning to ask people to give to the Appeal?
10. What aspect of the Appeal is most touching to your parishioners?
11. Is there anything else I should know that will help with this talk?
12. Is there any specific issue I should address?

Two

PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR TALK

THERE ARE FOUR BASIC SECTIONS TO YOUR TALK:

1. The Beginning

- Personal story about the program you represent

2. The Middle

- Direct and indirect impact of the *Appeal* in your assigned parish
- The overall impact of the *Appeal* on the archdiocese
- Scriptural reference

3. The “Ask”

- Ask the congregation to support the *Annual Catholic Appeal*
- Let parishioners know how they can make a pledge

4. The Ending

- Say “thank you” to the pastor and congregation

In this section of the workbook, you will gather the information you wish to include in your talk. The following worksheets are designed to help you put this information together.

Experienced presenters may have their own methods of accomplishing this, but the attached notes may still be helpful. Please use whatever method works best for you.

Two

PERSONAL STORY ABOUT THE PROGRAM YOU REPRESENT

- What is the most touching story you can think of in relation to your program?
- Is there someone you work with who truly inspires you?
- Write down specific stories or events that may have happened during the past year.
- What has been your biggest challenge? How was it overcome?
- What was your greatest success?
- How many people do you serve?

Two

IMPACT OF THE *APPEAL* IN YOUR ASSIGNED PARISH

Your conversation with the pastor will assist you with this section. Refer to your notes from that conversation to answer the following questions.

- Does this parish receive direct support in any way from the *Annual Catholic Appeal*?
(Your packet from the Appeal Office will also share any direct support the parish received.)
- What programs supported by the *Appeal* most impact the parishioners at this parish?
Which programs do they care most deeply about?

Below is a list of some ways parishes benefit from the *Annual Catholic Appeal* indirectly. Check one or two that you may highlight during your talk.

Support for Catholic educational programs, including schools and PSR programs

Support for Catholic Charities

Support for parishioners in need

Support for the permanent diaconate

Support for priest healthcare and retirement

Support for the seminary—training future pastors

Support for vocation programs—helping young people discern their calling

Support for Marriage Prep Programs

Support for Youth Ministry

Support for Pro-Life Programs

Support for parish food pantries

Support for rural healthcare through the Rural Parish Health and Dental Clinics

Support for One Classroom

THE LIST GOES ON...

Two

IMPACT OF THE *APPEAL* ON THE ARCHDIOCESE

- Scan the list of programs below, which benefit from the *Appeal*. As you review the list, identify the programs that mean the most to you.
- For each program you select, write one or two notes about why that program is important to you, or make note of a personal story you can tell about that program.

SERVING THE NEEDS OF OUR PARISHES

Elementary School Assistance
Stewardship and Development Support
for Parishes, Schools and Agencies
Office of Peace and Justice
Parish Emergency Assistance Fund
Parish Food Pantries
Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis
Basilica of St. Louis, King of France

SERVING THE NEEDS OF OUR YOUTH

Archdiocesan & Parochial High Schools
Archdiocesan Seminary
Vocation Programs
Newman Centers on College Campuses
One Classroom
Religious Formation
Special Education
Today and Tomorrow Educational Fund
High School Stewardship Essay Program
Office of Youth Ministry

SERVING THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE IN OUR PARISHES

Respect Life Apostolate
Evangelization and Discipleship
Adult Faith Formation
Natural Family Planning
Hispanic Ministry
Office of Racial Harmony
Catholic Deaf Ministry
Catholic Renewal Center

SERVING THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE IN OUR PARISHES, *continued*

Catholic St. Louis Magazine
Elementary Teachers Educational Fund
St. Charles Lwanga Center

SERVING THE NEEDS OF THE POOR

Catholic Charities
Affordable Housing Fund
Rural Parish Clinic
The Care Service at Sts. Joachim and Ann
Criminal Justice Ministry
Immigrant and Refugee Ministry
Bridge of Hope Lincoln County
The Wellston Center
Archbishop's Charity Fund
Meals Program at Sts. Peter & Paul Church
Messengers of Peace Mission Work

SERVING THE NEEDS OF THOSE WHO SERVE US

Care for Active and Retired Priests
Regina Cleri Priests Retirement Home
Continuing Formation for Priests
Permanent Diaconate
Support for Religious Orders

OTHER

Annual Catholic Appeal Expenses
Reserve for Unpaid Pledges
Archdiocesan Services

Program 1

Program 2

Program 3

Two

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE

The addendum of this manual features the Scripture readings from all three *Annual Catholic Appeal* weekends, as well as reflections linking these Scripture readings to Stewardship or the *Annual Catholic Appeal*. Please find Scripture readings for the weekend you are scheduled to speak. Read the Scripture and the notes.

Use the space provided below to make your own notes, linking the Scripture from that day to the *Annual Catholic Appeal*. As you make notes, keep them simple, short and easy to read.

Three

WRITING YOUR TALK

The next step is to organize your notes and form them into a coherent talk.

Please remember the point of your speech is not to convey the history of your program. The point is to convince the congregation that the *Annual Catholic Appeal* supports worthwhile organizations—like yours.

THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR TALK

THE BEGINNING ... THE PERSONAL STORY

(USE PART 1 OF "PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR TALK")

- Your opening comments are the most crucial part of the whole speech. Make sure they carry impact.
- Do not begin talking about the weather, thanking the pastor for allowing you to talk or commenting on how beautiful the church may be.
- If you have a story you wish to tell about a specific person in your organization, begin by immediately telling that story.
- If you have been introduced by the celebrant, your congregation "gets it." They know who you are, what program you represent, what your function is —there is no need to explain any of that. Jump right in with your story!

THE MIDDLE ... THE TRANSITION

(USE PARTS 2, 3 AND 4 OF "PREPARING TO WRITE YOUR TALK")

- In this section, you will share how the *Appeal* impacts this parish, directly and indirectly. Use your notes from Part 2 of "Preparing to Write Your Talk" to write this section.
- This is where you touch on how the stories you told about your organization are happening in many programs. Tell a personal story about another program or tell of the good work you have seen other programs accomplish. Use your notes from Part 3 of "Preparing to Write Your Talk" to write this section.
- Finally, you will link the *Annual Catholic Appeal* to the day's Scripture readings. Use your notes from Part 4 of "Preparing to Write Your Talk" to write this section.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

Three

WRITING YOUR TALK

THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR TALK ... THE “ASK”

- Be direct in asking the congregation to support the *Annual Catholic Appeal*. The “ask” is the reason you have graciously agreed to devote your Saturday evening and Sunday to the ACA. Please ask them to support the ACA and tell them specifically how they can do that. Remember to ask them to pray about their gift. All stewardship is closely tied to prayer.
- It is very important that the parishioners know exactly how they can make a pledge. Please be as specific as possible. For example, “Your pledge cards will be available in the St. Thomas Aquinas room just outside the main doors to the left. You may also make your gift online at aca.archstl.org.”
- Include instructions on how people can use the QR code to access online giving pages. You can even ask them to make their gift right then while you are talking.

THE ENDING ... THE “THANKS”

- Finally, please thank the pastor, the staff and, most importantly, the congregation for their time and attention. It is good to be brief.

IF YOU FOLLOW THE STEPS PROVIDED, YOUR SPEECH MAY HAVE THE FOLLOWING STRUCTURE:

- Tell a specific, powerful, heart-warming story about a particular individual.
- Tell a second story (*if time allows*).
- Share the direct and indirect impact of the *Appeal* in this parish.
- Comment about other programs impacted by the *Appeal*. Refer to the pew brochures / case statements.
- Refer to the day’s Scripture passages.
- Make the “ask.” Be specific about where they can pledge, mentioning the pledge card, the website, and the QR code when appropriate. Remember to ask them to pray about their gift.
- Say “Thank you.”

Four

REHEARSING YOUR TALK

Even if you have been a guest speaker for many years, it is crucial that you rehearse your speech out loud several times. As you practice your talk, do so in the same manner and with the same detail and inflection that you will use when in front of the parish. In doing so, you will likely see ways to further improve your talk. Stand up, just as you would if you were in front of the parish.

Then give your talk out loud. Be sure to time yourself. Don't whisper the speech or just review it in your mind but really deliver the whole talk, using the same mannerisms that you would use in front of the parish. Make notes as you go if you find areas that could be improved. Then make the changes and try again.

When you are done, check your time. If you spoke longer than 5 minutes, it is time to start cutting some of your words out. No matter how brilliant the talk is, if you are longer than 5 minutes, people are going to miss what you are saying. Just keep cutting until your talk is under 5 minutes.

Another suggestion is to record your talk. When you go back to listen to yourself, especially if you wait a day or two, you may be surprised at where you can improve.

It may help to give the talk to a trusted friend who is willing to give you honest feedback.

Four

REHEARSING YOUR TALK

Even if you are an experienced speaker, please read and use the suggestions given in this section. By giving this talk, you become the “face” of the *Appeal* for this parish. The impression that you give will impact ministries supported by the *Appeal* in this parish for years to come.

On the day of your talk, take the following steps. Make sure you arrive early enough to accomplish each task.

1. Arrive early.
2. Help set out pew brochures/case statements.
3. Remember to pray before you talk.
4. Go to the location where the pledge cards are set up. Thank the volunteers. The work they are doing at that moment is helping to fund your program.

It's effective to incorporate the names of the volunteers into your talk, if you can. By doing so, you affirm the importance of their work and highlight the commitment of specific parishioners to the *Appeal*.

This is especially effective in a smaller parish.

5. After Mass, make yourself available to greet the parishioners as they leave church. This can be one of the most rewarding aspects of this program.
6. Check in at the pledge card tables between Masses. Introduce yourself to any new volunteers and thank them.
7. After Mass, make it a point to thank the pastor and anyone else who was key in helping you that day.
8. Help gather the pew brochures/case statements.
9. As soon as you get home, sit down and write a brief, personal thank-you note to the pastor. Mail it Monday morning.

Thank you for your efforts. The Guest Speaker Program is one of the most important tools available for promoting the *Appeal*. Your gift of time and talent is helping our local Church fulfill its mission.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

APRIL 26/27 Second Sunday of Easter - *Sunday of Divine Mercy*

READING I

ACTS 5:12-16

Many signs and wonders were done among the people
at the hands of the apostles.

They were all together in Solomon's portico.

None of the others dared to join them, but the people esteemed them.

Yet more than ever, believers in the Lord,
great numbers of men and women, were added to them.

Thus they even carried the sick out into the streets
and laid them on cots and mats
so that when Peter came by,
at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them.

A large number of people from the towns
in the vicinity of Jerusalem also gathered,
bringing the sick and those disturbed by unclean spirits,
and they were all cured.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

APRIL 26/27 Second Sunday of Easter - *Sunday of Divine Mercy*

READING II

REVELATION 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

I, John, your brother, who share with you
the distress, the kingdom, and the endurance we have in Jesus,
found myself on the island called Patmos
because I proclaimed God's word and gave testimony to Jesus.
I was caught up in spirit on the Lord's day
and heard behind me a voice as loud as a trumpet, which said,
"Write on a scroll what you see."

Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me,
and when I turned, I saw seven gold lampstands
and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man,
wearing an ankle-length robe, with a gold sash around his chest.

When I caught sight of him, I fell down at his feet as though dead.
He touched me with his right hand and said, "Do not be afraid.
I am the first and the last, the one who lives.
Once I was dead, but now I am alive forever and ever.
I hold the keys to death and the netherworld.
Write down, therefore, what you have seen,
and what is happening, and what will happen afterwards."

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

APRIL 26/27 Second Sunday of Easter - *Sunday of Divine Mercy*

GOSPEL

JOHN 20:19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week,
when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews,
Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."
When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side.
The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.
Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."
And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them,
"Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them,
and whose sins you retain are retained."
Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.
So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord."
But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands
and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."
Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them.
Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you."
Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands,
and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe."
Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!"
Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me?
Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."
Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book.
But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,
and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

APRIL 26/27 Second Sunday of Easter - Sunday of Divine Mercy

REFLECTIONS

Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! On this Second Sunday of Easter, as we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday, we are reminded of God's limitless love and forgiveness, and our call to be *Messengers of Hope*.

Imagine how the disciples felt after Jesus was crucified. The leader in whom they had had so much hope was dead; they had abandoned Him as He predicted; and now they feared that the Jews would come after them, too. They were huddled together and afraid.

In today's Gospel, Jesus appears to the disciples and offers them His peace. Then, he breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained" (*Jn 20:23*), empowering them to be instruments of His mercy.

Thomas doubts until he touches Jesus's wounds, but Jesus doesn't rebuke him. He meets Thomas in his doubts and gives him what he needs to believe. He demonstrates mercy in action.

There are many in our communities who need someone to reach out and encourage them to believe in God's love. We are called to be *Messengers of Hope*, sharing Christ's mercy through our words and actions, offering peace, kindness, and compassion.

Each year, the *Annual Catholic Appeal* allows us to come together as a family in Christ to share the Good News and reach out to the suffering, the doubting, and the weary throughout the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Our gifts become hope and healing for the most vulnerable and spread His boundless love and mercy.

Today, let's embrace our call to be *Messengers of Hope*. Please give to the *Appeal* <<date and place>> or visit aca.archstl.org to learn more about the impact of your generosity.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

MAY 3/4 Third Sunday of Easter

READING I

ACTS 5:27-32, 40b-41

When the captain and the court officers had brought the apostles in
and made them stand before the Sanhedrin,
the high priest questioned them,
“We gave you strict orders, did we not,
to stop teaching in that name?
Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching
and want to bring this man’s blood upon us.”
But Peter and the apostles said in reply,
“We must obey God rather than men.
The God of our ancestors raised Jesus,
though you had him killed by hanging him on a tree.
God exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior
to grant Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins.
We are witnesses of these things,
as is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.”

The Sanhedrin ordered the apostles
to stop speaking in the name of Jesus, and dismissed them.
So they left the presence of the Sanhedrin,
rejoicing that they had been found worthy
to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

MAY 3/4 Third Sunday of Easter

READING II

REVELATION 5:11-14

I, John, looked and heard the voices of many angels
who surrounded the throne
and the living creatures and the elders.
They were countless in number, and they cried out in a loud voice:
“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain
to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength,
honor and glory and blessing.”
Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth
and under the earth and in the sea,
everything in the universe, cry out:
“To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor, glory and might,
forever and ever.”
The four living creatures answered, “Amen, “
and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

MAY 3/4 Third Sunday of Easter

GOSPEL

JOHN 21:1-14

At that time, Jesus revealed himself to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed himself in this way. Together were Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two others of his disciples.

Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."

They said to him, "We also will come with you."

So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore;

but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?"

They answered him, "No."

So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something."

So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish.

So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord."

When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord,

he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad, and jumped into the sea.

The other disciples came in the boat,

for they were not far from shore, only about a hundred yards, dragging the net with the fish.

When they climbed out on shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread.

Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught."

So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish.

Even though there were so many, the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them, "Come, have breakfast."

And none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they realized it was the Lord.

Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them, and in like manner the fish.

This was now the third time Jesus was revealed to his disciples after being raised from the dead.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

MAY 3/4 Third Sunday of Easter

REFLECTIONS

As we continue our celebration of Easter, in today's Gospel, we find the disciples returning to the familiar task of fishing. While their own efforts don't produce fruit, when they work together, with the Lord's guidance, their struggle is transformed into a huge success.

Jesus invites the disciples to have breakfast. The reading tells us, "When they climbed out on shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish you just caught'" (Jn 21, 9-10).

Jesus chose not to prepare everything for them, but rather to involve them in providing for themselves, with His guidance. We also see this in some of Jesus's other miracles, such as the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Jesus invites us to collaborate with Him.

Christ meets us in the everyday, and He calls us to work together in love and service as *Messengers of Hope*. All the Lord's work that we carry out in our parish would not be possible without the commitment of our clergy and you, our parishioners.

In the same way, when we come together as an archdiocese in support of the *Annual Catholic Appeal*, we sustain vital ministries and services that share Christ's love and reach out to the most vulnerable. Your gifts transform lives in our communities and sow the seeds of hope that will bear fruit for generations to come.

Today, let's embrace our call to be *Messengers of Hope*. Please give to the *Appeal* <<date and place>> or visit aca.archstl.org to learn more about the impact of your generosity.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

MAY 10/11 Fourth Sunday of Easter

READING I

ACTS 13:14, 43-52

Paul and Barnabas continued on from Perga and reached Antioch in Pisidia.
On the sabbath they entered the synagogue and took their seats.

Many Jews and worshipers who were converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas,
who spoke to them and urged them to remain faithful to the grace of God.

On the following sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.

When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy
and with violent abuse contradicted what Paul said.

Both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said,

“It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first, but since you reject it
and condemn yourselves as unworthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.

For so the Lord has commanded us, I have made you a light to the Gentiles,
that you may be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth.”

The Gentiles were delighted when they heard this and glorified the word of the Lord.

All who were destined for eternal life came to believe,
and the word of the Lord continued to spread through the whole region.

The Jews, however, incited the women of prominence
who were worshipers and the leading men of the city,
stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their territory.

So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them, and went to Iconium.

The disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

MAY 10/11 Fourth Sunday of Easter

READING II

REVELATION 7:9, 14b-17

I, John, had a vision of a great multitude,
which no one could count,
from every nation, race, people, and tongue.
They stood before the throne and before the Lamb,
wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands.

Then one of the elders said to me,
“These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress;
they have washed their robes
and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
“For this reason they stand before God’s throne
and worship him day and night in his temple.
The one who sits on the throne will shelter them.
They will not hunger or thirst anymore,
nor will the sun or any heat strike them.
For the Lamb who is in the center of the throne
will shepherd them
and lead them to springs of life-giving water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

MAY 10/11 Fourth Sunday of Easter

GOSPEL

JOHN 10:27-30

Jesus said:

“My sheep hear my voice;

I know them, and they follow me.

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

No one can take them out of my hand.

My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all,

and no one can take them out of the Father’s hand.

The Father and I are one.”

Addendum

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS

MAY 10/11 Fourth Sunday of Easter

REFLECTIONS

The readings today invite us to reflect on our identity and mission as followers of Christ.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells us:

"My sheep hear my voice;

I know them, and they follow me.

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

No one can take them out of my hand." **Jn 10:27-28**

Through Christ's resurrection, we have received the hope of eternal life. He is the Good Shepherd, and He wants all people to know Him, love Him, and follow Him. Our mission as His Church is to joyfully proclaim the Good News of salvation.

In today's first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, we see Paul and Barnabas living out this mission. Despite challenges and persecution, they boldly continue to preach the word of the Lord, inspiring joy and faith in the Gentiles. Courageously preaching the Gospel in word and in deed, they become *Messengers of Hope*.

These readings call us to hear Jesus' voice, trust in Him, and share His message of hope. We may face difficulties, but He assures us that no one can take us out of His hand (**Jn 10:28**).

Each year, the *Annual Catholic Appeal* allows us to come together as a family in Christ to make His love present throughout the Archdiocese of St. Louis and lead others to Him through life-giving ministries and programs. Our gifts become hope and healing for the most vulnerable and spread His boundless love and mercy.

Today, let's embrace our call to be *Messengers of Hope*. Please give to the *Appeal* <<date and place>> or visit aca.archstl.org to learn more about the impact of your generosity.



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

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*"For the needy will never be forgotten,
nor will the hope of the afflicted ever fade."*

Psalm 9:19