



THE LIVING  
WORD  
OF  
PENTECOST

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

July 2 - July 8



# SEASON AFTER PENTECOST

*This week's readings invite us to rest in the God of stability, reliability, and creativity.*

Rest is more than mindless passivity. Genuine rest, sabbath rest, is relational. It is anchored in something or someone. Scripture repeatedly invites us to rest in the God of stability, reliability, and creativity.

On Sunday, this invitation to rest appears in a generational transition from Abraham and Sarah to Isaac and Rebekah. Specifically, the invitation to rest hangs on their ability to trust the stability, reliability, and creativity of God's promise. For decades, Abraham and Sarah have struggled to rest in God's promise of a child. Left to their own devices, they have created a royal mess, so Genesis 24 narrates a generational transition that draws all our attention to God's stability, reliability, and creativity in the wildly providential provision of Isaac's wife. If you want the full flavor of this story, read the whole chapter. Sunday's assigned reading (Gen 24:34-67) is actually the second telling of the same story that appears at the start of the chapter. In other words, we are treated to two tellings of an incredibly providential encounter that emphasizes God's stability, reliability, and creativity.

In Matthew 11, Jesus builds upon this vision by promising that we will find our fullest rest in him. Jesus offers a form of rest that doesn't depend on material resources or social accomplishments. He promises a rest grounded in the stability, reliability, and creativity of God. When he commands us to take up his yoke, Jesus does not intend to pile heavy burdens upon our shoulders. Rather, he wants to teach us about the types of burdens we are called to bear. His burdens are the "easy" (Mt 11:30) burdens of gentleness and humility because he is "gentle and humble in heart" (Mt 11:29).

*We can bear the burden of gentleness, because God's promises are stable, reliable, and creative.*

*We can bear the burden of humility, because God's blessings are stable, reliable, and creative.*

*We can bear the burdens of Christ and find true rest for our souls.*



Our readings in the first half of the week prepare us for Sunday by introducing increasing complexity and anxiety in the family of God. In Genesis 25 and 27, we jump ahead in the generational story of God’s family only to find that a struggle with infertility (Abraham and Sarah) has given way to a struggle of sibling rivalry (Jacob and Esau). Will they still find rest in God’s stability, reliability, and creativity? In Romans 7, Paul affirms that we are not bound to sinful desires that bear fruit for death but rather are bound to the risen Christ “in order that we might bear fruit for God” (Rom 7:4). Even our innermost waywardness is no match for God’s stability, reliability, and creativity.

In the second half of the week, our readings continue unveiling a God who invites rest. In Genesis 27 and 29, restless and wayward Jacob experiences the same stability, reliability, and creativity that brought his parents together when he too finds a wife at a distant well. We also discover that God’s creativity extends even to Jacob’s “unloved” wife, Leah, who bears the ancestor of Messiah in the line of Judah. Other readings replay the fruitless desires of human hearts (Rom 1) only to emphasize God’s stability (Rom 3) and the creative, transforming power of divine love (Jn 13).

## FOR reflection

***Do you find it difficult or easy to find rest in God? Which of these words—stability, reliability, or creativity—gives you the most comfort when you think of resting in God?***





# SCRIPTURE

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK

<b>Thursday</b>	Psalm 45:10-17; Genesis 25:19-27; Romans 7:1-6
<b>Friday</b>	Psalm 45:10-17; Genesis 27:1-17; Romans 7:7-20
<b>Saturday</b>	Psalm 45:10-17; Genesis 27:18-29; Luke 10:21-24
<b>Sunday</b>	Psalm 45:10-17 or Song. 2:8-13; Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67 Zech. 9:9-12; Psalm 145:8-14; Romans 7:15-25a; Matt. 11:16-19, 25-30
<b>Monday</b>	Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Genesis 27:30-46; Romans 1:18-25
<b>Tuesday</b>	Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Genesis 29:1-14; Romans 3:1-8
<b>Wednesday</b>	Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Genesis 29:31-35; John 13:1-17

### *Why do the daily readings begin on Thursday?*

The daily readings for each week begin on Thursday and end on the following Wednesday. The Thursday through Saturday readings prepare the reader for the Sunday ahead. The Monday through Wednesday readings reflect on what was presented on Sunday.

# The Morning Liturgy

## **Opening Scripture**

For this is what the high and exalted One says— he who lives forever, whose name is holy: ‘I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

*Isaiah 57:15*

## **Opening Prayer** (based on Psalm 51)

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. *Amen.*

## **Scripture Reading** (read Psalm and Gospel text here)

## **Period of Silence**

## **Confessing Our Faith** (Apostles’ Creed)

## **The Lord’s Prayer**

## **The Collect** (Proper 9)

*O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.*

*Amen.*

## *A Midday Prayer*

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you." Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and forever. *Amen.*

## *An Early Evening Prayer*

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen.*

## *A Bedtime Confession and Prayer*

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy name. *Amen.*

*Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*







Image: The Baptism of The Holy Spirit | Artist: Rebecca Brogan | [www.jtbarts.com](http://www.jtbarts.com)