

But You are a Chosen Race, A Royal Priesthood, A Holy Nation, A People  
For His Own Possession, That You May Proclaim The Excellencies of  
Him Who Called You Out of Darkness Into His Marvelous Light.

1 Peter 1:9

## SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTION

Dear St. Joseph Parishioners and Visitors,

On this **5th Sunday of Easter** the Church reminds us of who we are: "The chosen race and the royal priesthood". Today we gather to exercise our royal priesthood by offering a spiritual sacrifice as Christ did.

In today's first reading, the drama that unfolded led to the election of seven deacons in order to take care of the social needs of the believers. We can learn the following lessons from this reading. First, we must not neglect or take the social or material needs of our communities for granted. If left unattended, they could undermine the work of God. Second, we must balance both our spiritual and material needs because both are important. Third, we must not forget who we are and not to neglect our primary calling. Peter rightly noted: "It would not be right for us to neglect the word of God so as to give out food...we will hand over this duty and devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the word of God." If we pay too much attention to material needs, the spiritual will certainly suffer. We cannot do everything by ourselves. We must let others play their role by helping us. Finally, we must be wise and prayerful in selecting ministers for God's mission. They must be "men of good reputation, filled with the Holy Spirit and with wisdom."

In the second reading, Peter reminds us of who we truly are: "A chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God..." Here, Peter highlights our participation in the priesthood of Christ through the "common or general priest priesthood." This is certainly by virtue of our baptism (CCC1268). Baptism configures us to become "priests." Thus, in this pastoral letter, Peter highlights the efficacy of the "Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation) on us as believers. Through this, he reminds us of our priestly and royal heritage.

In today's Gospel, Jesus assures us of a place in his kingdom: "Let not your hearts be troubled...there are many rooms in my father's house...so that where I am you may be too." This is a clear indication that by virtue of baptism we are truly children of God. This is why he considers us worthy of being where he is going to be. Unfortunately, some of us do not know who we are, or believe that there is a beautiful place being prepared for us by Christ. This is also the reason many of us cannot maximize our priestly and royal potentials. As priests and people of royal descent, we must assert ourselves positively. It takes faith to do this.

Therefore, let us ask God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to help us live as members of the royal priesthood. Also, during this glorious and gracious season of Easter, let us: "Rejoice in the Lord" for what God has done for us. Alleluia, alleluia!

Have a Blessed 5th Sunday of Easter 2026!

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Pastor

