

**GOSPEL MEDITATION -
ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE**

May 12, 2024

**The 7th Sunday
of
Easter**

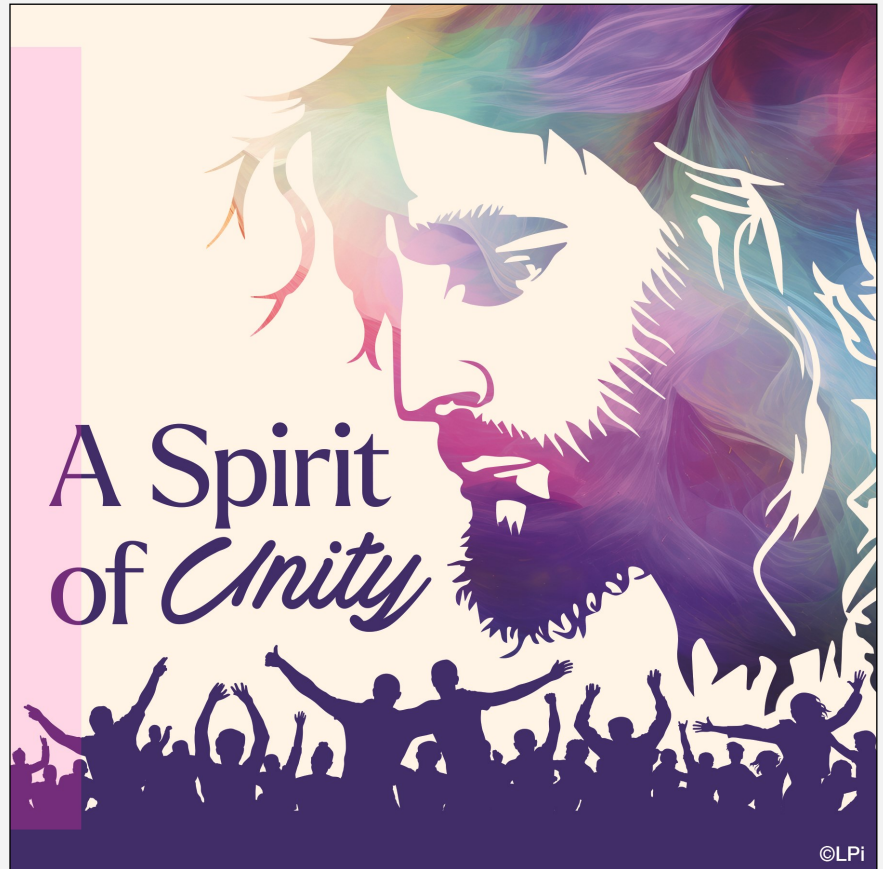
Readings:

Acts 1:15—17, 20a, 20c—26

Psalm 103

1 John 4:11—16

John 17:11b—19



A few months ago, I had the singular privilege of a private meeting with Pope Francis. We were a small group of pastors, composed largely of non-Catholics. The Holy Father wished to

discuss our work for Christian unity. The phrase I remember him saying with greatest frequency was: *Tutti dentro*. It means, “Everyone in.” He clearly wanted us to emphasize that the Church is made for the whole human race, not a select few. At the center of his concern was unity. We are all brothers and sisters, he said multiple times. The Church’s primary longing is for everyone to join Her.

This longing is at the heart of this Ascension feast day. We hear the longest recorded prayer of the one whom Pope Francis represents. Jesus’ concern is unity, praying to the Father, “that they may be one, even as we are one” (John 17:11). The deep unity of all people in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit is what Jesus most desires. It is what he ascends to accomplish. Do we have this same burning desire in our hearts, too? Or do we see Christian unity as an unrealizable dream? Or worse, as something that threatens our own narrow tribal interests? This feast is a wonderful time to consider our attitude toward Christian unity, and to commit to do whatever we can to foster it. It is the Pope’s desire because it is that of Jesus — and it should be ours, too.

— Father John Muir

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