

**Rogate (The Sixth Sunday of Easter)**  
**10 May 2026**  
**John 16:23-33**

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—Amen

The text for this morning's sermon is the Holy Gospel appointed for today from the Holy Gospel according to St. John, the sixteenth chapter.

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit—Amen

Alleluia! Christ is risen! (He is risen indeed! Alleluia!)

For the third Sunday in a row, our Holy Gospel takes us to the Upper Room on Holy Thursday night just before Jesus is arrested. And what we find are disciples who think that they finally have it all figured out. Finally, finally, Jesus is speaking plainly! No more parables and figures of speech. They get it. They understand. They believe. Or so they think.

The disciples boast to Jesus. Since He finally speaks plainly, now they can truly believe. But He goes on to speak plainly about the coming distress—in which they will scatter like scared little children and leave Him alone.

It is just so like Jesus. Just when we think we have everything all figured out and nailed down, God usually shakes us out of that sense of prideful satisfaction. It is when everything seems to be going well, and we start to believe we deserve God's favor, that the house of cards usually comes crashing down.

Do some think that because they have jumped through the hoops of catechesis class and been through confirmation, that they are all done learning about their faith? Do some believe that because they come to church every week, they wouldn't get any benefit from further study of God's Word? Do our Bibles collect dust? Are our prayers missing in action? Is our love for our

fellow man cold? Since, after all, we have everything all set—just so—we wouldn't want to upset the applecart, now....

But that's precisely what Jesus does. Again and again, He makes His disciples—and us—think a second time. He doesn't let them rest on the laurels of self-righteousness. But He shows them they do need a savior, after all. And so do we. They don't have all their ducks in a row. And neither do we.

The law shows us our sin, too. It leaves us without the security blanket of self-righteousness. It pokes and prods at the flimsy armor of our idea that everything is fine and exposes the gaps and holes. There's a sin. There's another sin. An unkind word here. A hateful thought there. A moment of laziness. An excuse for this, blaming another for that. Selfishness here. Lust and greed there. We're a mess. We need help.

So, ask! Jesus invites his disciples to ask him, to ask the Father through him. Ask for forgiveness—and He will give it. After all, your debts were paid in full at the cross. Ask for strength—and He will give it. Ask for deliverance—and it will come, in His time, in His way. Ask for God's love and favor, and know that in Christ, you already have it. Ask for peace, and you'll receive the peace which passes understanding. And ask for joy. For He turns sorrow into joy.

That's the other side of this coin, you know. When things are going well—too well—the law knocks us down from our high horse. But when we feel trampled under the weight of our sins and failings, when we know how bad things are and admit it to ourselves and to our God, then He turns it around again.

Just as He took the sorrow of His disciples and turned it into joy, so He does for us. And just as that joy cannot be taken away, so it is for us.

That joy is a deep and lasting sense of satisfaction, peace, happiness, and wonder. Like the peace which passes understanding, the joy Christ brings is above and beyond the happiness of the moment. It is rooted deeper, and it reaches further.

It is a joy which comes from Christ's resurrection. For we, like the disciples, rejoice that Jesus lives even though He died. And we rejoice to know that death has no hold on Him—that He will never die again. But even more, there is joy in knowing what it all means for us. His resurrection means our resurrection. His eternal life means our eternal life. Because He has conquered death, we will conquer death through Him. So even life's greatest sorrow, death itself, has lost its sting and is subject to the joy He brings. The sorrow of Good Friday brings the joy of Easter Sunday.

Though Jesus would soon leave those disciples, He would soon see them again. After He died, He rose, and appeared to them. He talked with them. He ate with them. But again, a time of departure would come, as He ascended into heaven. And again, the promise of His return assured them, and us, that He will come again in glory on the last day. That promise also gives us great joy.

Are you, like those disciples, so sure of yourself and your faith that everything is “just fine?” Do you say that you have no sin, and deceive yourself? Or do you sorrow over sin, feel it, know it? Then ask for what you need from the Father, through the Son, by the power of the Spirit. And He will give it to you. And you will live. He will turn your sorrow into joy, a joy which you will know forever.

Rest in this. The One to whom you pray—indeed, the very reason you pray to Him—is the One who has forgiven you all your sins.

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit—Amen

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus—Amen