



WEEK 3 - May 17-23

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for bringing us together today. As we read Your Word and reflect on Your truth, open our hearts and minds to hear from You. Help us to understand what it means to live in Your kingdom and to be Your witnesses in our everyday lives.

Holy Spirit, we invite You to fill this space. Give us clarity, humility, and courage as we share and listen. Help us not just to learn, but to be transformed—to become people who act on what You’ve already called us to do. Guide our conversation and draw us closer to You and to one another.

In Jesus’ name, Amen

CLICK HERE TO READ THIS WEEKEND’S READINGS

First Reading: **Acts 1:1-11**

Responsorial: **Psalm 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9**

Second Reading: **Ephesians 1:17-23**

Gospel: **Matthew 28:16-20**

INSIGHTS FROM OUR READINGS

The apostles wanted to know when the kingdom would be restored, but Jesus redirected their focus. He told them they wouldn’t know the timing—instead, they would receive power through the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses.

In the same way, God has empowered each of us to live as missionaries—locally, nationally, and globally—bringing the reality of heaven to earth. So why do we keep looking to God to act, when He has already commissioned us to make a difference?

Often referred to as the “Great Commission,” this calling isn’t just for a select few—it’s for everyone. We sometimes assume that clergy or church staff are the ones responsible, but by virtue of our baptism, we are all anointed as priest, prophet, and king.

The same Holy Spirit given to the apostles is alive and active in us today. It is His Spirit working in our hearts, equipping and sending us to live out God’s mission right where we are.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” **(Acts 1:8)**

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE

Take some time to reflect on this week's message and discuss with your group:

1. The Kingdom of God has been most succinctly described as the place where God's will is done. How does the idea of being on mission connect with this definition?
2. **Read aloud Acts 1:8.** What does Jesus promise his followers? What is your reaction to that verse?
3. An angel appears to the apostles and asks them why they are looking at the sky instead of doing what he told them to do. Why are we tempted to look to God for help rather than do what he instructs us to do?
4. Jesus is coming back to put the world back in right order and yet he expects us to act. What are your thoughts on that truth?
5. A couple of weeks ago we asked what are the injustices in the world that bother you. Share with the group again what they are. Have you felt any tug to address those issues either through ministry at SMIC/SJV or on your own?

PRAY

- Ask God to give you courage to live out your faith and share it when opportunities come.
SUGGESTION: Ask God to show you where He is calling you to share your faith and be His disciple. Pray for the courage to trust Him, even when you have doubts.
- Pray for awareness—to recognize where God is already working around you and how to join Him.
- Ask God to grow your compassion for others, especially those who are hurting, overlooked, or far from Him.

ACT

- Reach out to someone this week—check in, pray with them, or invite them into conversation.
- Find a need in your community (a neighbor, coworker, or local cause) and take action.
- Spend time with God each day and ask, “Who can I love or serve today?”—then follow through.
- SUGGESTION: Learn more about a ministry/organization in your parish or community and prayerfully discern if this is where God is asking you to serve and help make disciples.

INSPIRE

- Be open about what God is doing in your life—real, honest experiences can encourage others more than perfection.
- Live out your faith through kindness, integrity, and service—people are often inspired by what they see.
- Be intentional with your words this week. Speak life into others. Remind them of their purpose and how God can use them too.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE GROUP

Take some time to pray together for the persons or people on the Hearts of your small group members.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,

Thank You for reminding us that You have given us both a mission and the power to carry it out. Help us to not just look to You for answers, but to step forward in faith and obedience.

Holy Spirit, empower us to be Your witnesses—in our homes, our communities, and beyond. Show us where You are already at work and give us the courage to join You there.

As we leave, help us carry Your love, truth, and justice into the world around us. Let our lives reflect Your kingdom, where Your will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

We trust You with what we've shared and learned today. Continue to shape us and use us for Your purposes. In Jesus' name, Amen.