

Sunday Readings Reflections of 5/8/2016

Reading 1 Acts 7:55-60

Picture the scene. A daring young man is surrounded by people who want to shut him up for good. His name is Stephen. He is a deacon who serves the needy of the Christian community at Jerusalem. Those who do not accept Jesus drag Stephen out of town and stone him to death. But they do not defeat him. Stephen, the Church's first martyr, imitates Jesus by asking God to forgive his murderers.

Reading 2 Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20

In this reading from the closing chapter of the Book of Revelation, we hear Jesus repeating his promise to come again at the end of time. He will reward those who have been faithful. When will Jesus come? We do not know, because God's time is not our time. But we make the words of Revelation our prayer each day by saying: Come, Lord Jesus!

Gospel John 17:20-26

Today we are listening in on Jesus' prayer to the Father at the Last Supper. His voice communicates deep emotion as he prays for his friends - then and now. What Jesus wants most is unity - unity among all believers, and unity between believers and God. "That they may be one, as we are one," he prays.

Jesus' prayer reminds us that if the love of God is truly alive in us, the proof of that love will be in our unity with others. Divisions among Christians are a sign that we still have much work to do.