

“He is Risen!”

**Acts Bible Study
St. Peter’s Catholic Church**

Introduction

By reading the Acts of the Apostles, we see a glimpse of the Catholic Church at its very beginning. The joy and boldness of the apostles can inspire and encourage us today.

In this six-week study, we will focus on six different Scripture passages from the first third of Acts, when the story is centered around Jerusalem and the original apostles. For each passage, there will be some questions for discussion or prayer, as well as suggested reading for you to do on your own so that you can be “caught up” in the story for the next week’s passage.

We hope that this can be helpful for discussion in small groups, discussion among a family or married couple, and for personal prayer. Prior to the first meeting, it would be helpful to read the first two chapters of Acts.

Week One: Peter Heals a Lame Beggar

- **Begin with a prayer**

In your own words, you can thank God for this opportunity to read his Word, and ask him to guide our reflection on Holy Scripture and our discussion together.

- **Scripture to read and discuss: Acts 3:1-10**

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple area for the three o’clock hour of prayer. And a man crippled from birth was carried and placed at the gate of the temple called “the Beautiful Gate” every day to beg for alms from the people who entered the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. But Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” He paid attention to them, expecting to receive something from them. Peter said, “I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk.” Then Peter took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles grew strong. He leaped up, stood, and walked around, and went into the temple with them, walking and jumping and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the one who used to sit begging at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and they were filled with amazement and astonishment at what had happened to him.

- **Discussion / Reflection**

- Where did Peter and John go to pray? At what time?
- What are your thoughts of the beggar? What types of struggles does he have?
- What is Peter’s response to the request for money?
- What are characteristics in this healing that we see in the other Gospels?

- What should the poor expect of you? If you have no money, how can we aid the poor?
- How is this an experience of God's goodness exceeding our expectations? Have you seen God do this in your life or in the life of another?
- Have you experienced a healing from Jesus, or through brothers and sisters in Christ? (physical, spiritual, or emotional)

- **For the week:**

Pray with Acts, chapters 3 and 4. Read slowly in parts if necessary, make notes of words that stand out, write any questions, or how you are being called to respond.

To consider:

- How do they preach the Good News of Jesus?
- Why were they arrested? Where do they get this courage from?

Why not spend time in daily prayer this week, building a new habit or increase one that has already started, developing it further? Quiet yourself, ask for the Lord to be present with you, talk to the Lord, listen in silence, and be thankful!

- **Close with a prayer**

In small group, were there any intentions? This would be a good time to lift up those intentions, especially if a healing is needed for someone in the group.

Extra Notes from Father Andrew:

In the opening verses of Acts, Luke explains how Jesus spent forty days with the disciples after the Resurrection, teaching them and preparing them. At the end of that time, he tells them to await the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem, after which they will be his witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (1:8) We will watch this threefold mission unfold as the book develops; first the faith will spread in Jerusalem starting with Pentecost (Acts 1-7), then it will start to go throughout the nearby areas of Judea and Samaria (Acts 8-12), and then through missionaries like Saint Paul to the rest of the known world (Acts 13-28).

We see in Acts 2 the speech of Peter after receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This speech is what we are hearing at Mass this weekend and next weekend. Acts 3 & 4 feature additional speeches from Peter. You can see the common themes: Jesus truly died; he truly has risen; he is the savior God promised; you must repent of your sins and be baptized. These common themes are what theologians would call the "kerygma" (proclamation), the essence of the Gospel message, and these are the key truths that we would want to help share with our non-Christian friends and neighbors today. It is exciting to see these truths first proclaimed by the apostles, and with such joy and power!