



Standing  
Together  
in  
Safeguarding



## **The National Day of Prayer for Victims and Survivors of Abuse Tuesday of the 5<sup>th</sup> week of Eastertide - 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

### **Scripture Reflections for the day and the following Sunday**

It is suggested that in masses on both of these days an appropriate Eucharistic Prayer might be used. "Jesus, Who Went About Doing Good". This can be found in Appendix IV to the Order of Mass on page 824 of the Roman Missal.

### **Readings for the 5<sup>th</sup> May**

Acts 14:19-28

Psalm 145 (144)

John 14:27-31

### **Scripture Reflection**

Abuse takes many forms, one of which is physical harm. In today's reading from the Acta of the Apostles, Paul and Barnabas, on their first missionary journey, are in Lystra where up till now, people have been treating them like gods. Some people who were opposed to their preaching, roused up the crowd against them and the mob stoned Paul, leaving him for dead. Somehow, by the grace of God, and with the help and support of his disciples, Paul manages to recover, returning to the city before journeying on to Derbe to continue his missionary work with his companion Barnabas.

In today's gospel, Jesus gives his disciples the gift of his peace. The peace that Jesus offers is not peace in the way that the world understands it. Peace for Jesus is not just the absence of violence – although for many who have suffered violent abuse, its absence is a blessed relief. The peace that Jesus offers his disciples, and offers us too, comes from the infinite source of all peace and love in our universe which is God. It is a peace that no one can take away from us, because it is a peace that the Holy Spirit gives us from within, and it finds its rest deep in our hearts where it remains permanently dwelling with us.

The Church should always be a place where people can turn to for help and support when in danger. A place to receive and feel the Peace of Christ when they have been hurt and abused. Sadly, this has not always been so in the past, but please God, it must always be so in future.





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### **Readings for the 10<sup>th</sup> May**

Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

Psalm 66(65):1-3a. 4-5. 6-7a. 16, 20. R1

1 Peter 3:15-18

John 14:15-21

### **Scripture Reflection**

We read in the Acts of the Apostles how members of the Church in Jerusalem had been persecuted, culminating in Stephen's martyrdom. This prompts some of the apostles, such as Philip, to disperse and take the Word of Christ out into the world, bringing healing and joy to people who had been suffering in many ways. Today, there is still much suffering in the world, and appallingly some of this suffering has been caused by people who call themselves followers of Christ.

Our second reading from the first letter of Peter encourages us to hold onto hope when we are persecuted or abused. Jesus himself suffered incredible physical torture, culminating in his death. But even his death by crucifixion on a cross was finally overcome by the triumph of his resurrection. This does not mean that anyone should tolerate living life in pain and suffering, but it does mean that Jesus understands what it is to do so, and he has compassion for all those who suffer mental, spiritual, physical or any form of abuse.

We read in our gospel passage that before he returns to Heaven, Jesus tells his followers that he will ask his Father to send us a helper, a Spirit of truth, to remain with us and live in us, giving us encouragement and filling us with God's love.

As followers of Jesus, we must always be doing his work of caring for each other, especially for the young and the vulnerable, protecting them from harm, accompanying them as they struggle with hurt and offering them an opportunity to receive prayerful and practical support.

Let's pray that the Catholic church might truly be a universal church of love and healing for those who have suffered abuse.

