



# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

*"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."*

**Our Vision:** *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

**THIS SUNDAY — May 14, 2023**

## **"An Unknown God"**



In his zeal to fulfill Christ's command to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, the Apostle Paul goes even to Athens, the city with the

most shrines and temples dedicated to the pagan gods of the Greeks, but also the city where classical Greek philosophy had flourished in ancient times.

The story in the 17th chapter of the Book of Acts tells us how St. Paul found a way to address the Athenians about the true God. He found an altar with an inscription saying, "to an unknown god".

Not wanting to leave any possible deity out of their worship, the Athenians had gone this far. But this is the opportunity St. Paul uses to talk to them about the only God.

He starts by exalting their rigorous religiosity in the fact that they did not even leave out a possible unknown god. He then identifies this god they do not know with the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

In fact, the true God is unknown in the way Athenians "knew" their gods. They had carefully crafted stories about the origin of each of their gods and goddesses, and knew their names well. They even had images to represent them that portrayed their relevant features.

The God of Israel, on the other hand, could not be represented by any image of anything in creation. There were no stories related to His origin, and His name, which was sparsely used by the true worshipers out of great respect, simply meant “I am (who I am)”.

The Hebrews “knew” their God in a totally different way. Their God was the creator of all that exists in all possible visible or invisible realms, and the stories they told and retold about Him were those of His mighty acts of salvation in favor of His chosen people.

They also “knew” their God in a personal way, through their devotion and prayers, and in a communal way, through their celebrations throughout the year. All their lives were centered around the worship of the true God. Even so, God still looked more transcendent than immanent. There was no right balance between these two dimensions of God.

Jesus came to show them that the transcendent God was also close to them, inside and among them, and that His unconditional love, shown in human form through Jesus Christ, is the very essence of our being, and is to be manifested in our everyday lives when we get to “know” Him in the only way God can be known to us humans—through the manifestation of His infinite love.

To show this true knowledge of God to the Athenians, St. Paul uses a phrase that some of the Greek poets had already used when referring to the deity (probably the Cilician Stoic philosopher Aratus—a contemporary of St. Paul): “in him we live, and move and have our being.” And also, “For we too are his offspring.”

In this way, St. Paul makes clear to the Athenians what our relationship to the true God is, and how it is totally ignorant to try to represent Him “like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the imagination of mortals.”

He then takes the boldest step, and tells them about Jesus Christ, “a man whom He has appointed, and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead.”

On hearing this, according to the Book of Acts, many turned away and told Paul they would hear him about this on another occasion. But some did believe and turned their hearts to the true and only God who can save.

Talking about the resurrected life is also bold nowadays, when so many people find it contrary to logic and science. But as true followers of Christ, we should imitate St. Paul

in his shrewdness to find the right occasion, and his boldness to tell the truth of our faith.

The Easter message is the central message of our faith: Christ is risen. He is risen indeed, as we shall also be risen if we are faithful in our proclamation through our words and deeds.

Fr. Carlos Espósito

Readings for The Sixth Sunday after Easter

Acts 17:22-31 1 Peter 3:8-18 Psalm 148:7-14 John 15:1-8

## CALENDAR

Note: We continue worshipping in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10am. Tuesday Noon Mass and Friday Morning Prayer at 10:00am are held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel.

**SUNDAY May 14, 2023 Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church**

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

Recording of Mass available before noon at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

**Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children**

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

**Christian Formation** Meets next on May 14 at Noon in the Rector's Office. Book Study: The Three Conversions of the Christian Life

**TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel**

**THURSDAY Spanish Class 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the Flower Room. Taught by Fr. Carlos**

**FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel**

**SUNDAY May 21, 2023 The Seventh Sunday of Easter**

**10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church**

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

Recording of Mass available before noon at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

**Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children**

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

**Christian Formation** Meets next on May 28 at Noon in the Rector's Office. Book Study: The Three Conversions of the Christian Life

### **OUR CORE VALUES:**

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally

An Anglo-Catholic Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego

[www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)