



Handout for week of 5/7/18 John 17:6-19 & Acts 1; 15-17, 20-26

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Stone, Naomi. [What is Your Heart's Greatest Truth?](#)

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[Monastery Sunday Homilies](#)

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(Verses in italics are omitted in the lectionary reading for today)

Acts 1: 15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) 16 and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus-- 17 he was one of our number and shared in this ministry."

18 *(With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. 19 Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)*

20 For," said Peter, "it is written in the book of Psalms, "*May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it, and, "May another take his place of leadership.'* 21 Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection." 23 So they proposed two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25 to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs." 26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.



St. Matthias: Apostle. The Greek *Matthias* (or, in some manuscripts, *Maththias*), is a name derived from *Mattathias*, Heb. *Mattithiah*, signifying "gift of Yahweh." Matthias was one of the seventy disciples of [Jesus](#), and had been with Him from His baptism by John to the Ascension (Acts i, 21, 22). It is related (Acts, i, 15-26) that in the days following the Ascension, Peter proposed to the assembled brethren, who numbered one hundred and twenty, that they choose one to fill the place of the traitor [Judas](#) in the Apostolate. Two disciples, Joseph, called Barsabas, and Matthias were selected, and lots were drawn, with the result in favour of Matthias, who thus became associated with the eleven Apostles. Zeller has declared this narrative unhistoric, on the plea that the Apostles were in Galilee after the death of [Jesus](#). As a matter of fact they did return to Galilee, but the Acts of the Apostles clearly state that about the feast of Pentecost they went back to Jerusalem.

All further information concerning the life and death of Matthias is vague and contradictory. According to Nicephorus (Hist. eccl., 2, 40), he first preached the Gospel in Judea, then in Ethiopia (that is to say, Colchis) and was crucified. The Synopsis of Dorotheus contains this tradition Matthias preached the Gospel to barbarians and cannibals in the interior of Ethiopia, at the harbour of the sea of Hyssus, at the mouth of the river Phasis. He died at Sebastopolis, and was buried there, near the Temple of the Sun. Still another tradition maintains that Matthias was stoned at Jerusalem by the Jews, and then beheaded (cf. Tillemont, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire eccl. des six premiers siècles", I, 406-7). It is said that St. Helena brought the [relics](#) of St. Matthias to Rome, and that a portion of them was at Trier. Bollandus (Acta SS., May, III) doubts if the [relics](#) that are in Rome are not rather those of the St. Matthias who was Bishop of Jerusalem about the year 120, and whose history would seem to have been confounded with that of the Apostle. The Latin Church celebrates the feast of St. Matthias on 24 February and the Greek Church on 9 August.

My dear Trappist friend Fr. Matthias (Jim) Kerndt of New Melleray Abbey who I knew and loved for many years.

