

**Acts of the Apostles Bible Study-week 6**  
**Year A – Easter Season**

**June 5, 2011 – Seventh Sunday of Easter – Acts 1:12-14**

*After Jesus had been taken up to heaven the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they entered the city they went to the upper room where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.*

Luke's report of the disciples' activities as they waited for the Spirit's promised coming at Pentecost gives a pattern we would do well to emulate. Though Pentecost was a unique inaugural event in the church's life, the steps that preceded it are essential for any fresh work of the Spirit.

Obedient to their Lord's command to await the Spirit's coming in Jerusalem, the disciples return to the city (1:4). They gather in a spacious room above the tumult and prying eyes of street traffic.

The assembly included three elements: the eleven apostles, women and Jesus' relatives. Luke explicitly names the eleven and in that way establishes the continuity between Jesus' ministry and the apostolic foundation of the church (Lk 6:14-16). Luke also draws attention to the faithful women who accompanied and physically supported Jesus in his ministry. They had witnessed his death and received the first news of his resurrection (Lk 8:1-3; 23:49; 24:1-11). Luke's discussions of women serve to indicate that barriers of gender are abolished among those who will participate in the church's witness in power. In referring to Jesus' family, Luke not only foreshadows the leadership that some of those relatives would exercise (Acts 12:2; 15:13; 21:18) but also highlights Jesus' Messiahship and the link between the church and Israel.

This core of disciples, along with others, engaged in united, persistent prayer. They had not been commanded to pray, only to wait. But Jesus' own example at his baptism and his teachings, especially regarding how the Spirit would come in response to prayer, probably provided enough guidance (Lk

3:21; 11:13; 18:1, 8). The disciples' prayer was united, a quality that would characterize their common life under the Spirit's blessing (Acts 2:46; 4:24; 5:12). Their prayer was persistent. They devoted themselves to set times of daily corporate prayer until God answered from heaven.

Note: A sabbath day's journey was the distance one could travel on the Sabbath which was about a half a mile.