

Scripture Study

Third Sunday of Easter – Cycle B



Opening prayer

Acts 3:13-15,17-19

(Psalm 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9)

1 John 2:1-5a

Luke 24:35-48

Overview of the Gospel:

- This Sunday's reading takes place on Easter Sunday. Jesus has already appeared to the women at the tomb (Luke 24:1-12), to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (verses 13-35), and to Simon Peter (verse 34). He will make final appearances to the disciples in Jerusalem (Luke 24:36-43), when he gives the disciples final instructions (Luke 24:44-49), and at the ascension (Luke 24:50-53). In fact, in Luke's gospel, all the resurrection appearances take place in and around Jerusalem; moreover, they are all recounted as having taken place on Easter Sunday.
- Jesus appears to the disciples, presumably in the Upper Room where they often gathered. Jesus' resurrected body is still physical but no longer earthly, having special qualities: it is incorruptible, it can pass through locked doors (John 20:19), it can vanish at will (Luke 24:31), and it is no longer subject to the limitations of time, space, or the laws of nature (CCC 646, 659). By this we have an indication of the type of bodies we will have at our own resurrections.
- Jesus accomplishes three things in this appearance: he establishes the reality of his resurrection from the dead; he gives his disciples insight and power to understand his mission in the light of the Old Testament prophecies; and he tasks them with spreading his message, not only to their own people, but to the entire world.

Questions:

- In the 1st Reading, St. Peter tells his listeners at the first Christian Pentecost a number of things they were already aware of. What one piece of good news did he give them that would shock them and change their lives (see verse 15)? What difference does this make in your life?
- In the 2nd Reading, what does St. John tell us is the key to authentically knowing Jesus? Is it head knowledge? Is it an intellectual assent of faith? What is it?
- In the Gospel Reading, what event is being referred to in verse 35?
- Why are the disciples having so much trouble believing? Why was it necessary for them to see that Jesus was not a ghost? What evidence given by Jesus helps them to believe?
- What task does Jesus give the disciples (verse 47-48; Matthew 28:19-20)? With what promise? How must they have felt about this?
- Why is it important to you that Jesus' mission was anticipated clearly in the Old Testament? What difference does Jesus' Resurrection make?
- Where is the mission field Jesus has sent you? Who are some of the people you can witness to by your life? By your words? How do or have you responded to Jesus' mission for you?

Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 108, 572, 601, 627, 641, 644-45, 730, 981, 999, 1122, 1239, 1347

Closing prayer

Every Christian should make Christ present among men. He ought to act in such a way that those who know Him sense 'the aroma of Christ' (cf. 2 Corinthians 2:15). Men should be able to recognize the Master in His disciples. --St Josemaria Escriva

Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings!

"Jesus opened their minds to understand the scriptures"

Scripture: Luke 24:35-48

35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. 36 As they were saying this, Jesus himself stood among them. 37 But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. 38 And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? 39 See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have." 41 And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate before them. 44 Then he said to them, "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, 46 and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things.



Meditation: Aren't we like the apostles? We won't believe unless we can see with our own eyes. The gospels attest to the reality of the resurrection. Jesus goes to great lengths to assure his disciples that he is no mere ghost or illusion. He shows them the marks of his crucifixion and he explains how the scriptures foretold his death and rising. Jerome, an early church bible scholar, comments:

"As he showed them real hands and a real side, he really ate with his disciples; really walked with Cleophas; conversed with men with a real tongue; really reclined at supper; with real hands took bread, blessed and broke it, and was offering it to them...Do not put the power of the Lord on the level with the tricks of magicians, so that he may appear to have been what he was not, and may be thought to have eaten without teeth, walked without feet, broken bread without hands, spoken without a tongue, and showed a side which had no ribs." (From a letter to Pammachius against

John of Jerusalem 34, 5th century)

The centrality of the gospel is the cross; but fortunately it does not stop there. Through the cross Jesus defeated our enemies – death and Satan and won pardon for our sins. His cross is the door to heaven and the key to paradise. The way to glory is through the cross. When the disciples saw the risen Lord they disbelieved for joy! How can death lead to life, the cross to victory? Jesus shows us the way and he gives us the power to overcome sin and despair, and everything else that would stand in the way of his love and truth. Just as the first disciples were commissioned to bring the good news of salvation to all the nations, so, we, too, are called to be witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus Christ to all who live on the face of the earth. Do you witness the joy of the gospel to those around you?

"Lord Jesus, open our minds to understand the scriptures that we may fully comprehend the truth of your word. Anoint us with your power and give us boldness to proclaim the gospel in word and deed."

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