

Luke 24:35-48

The disciples told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised Jesus at the breaking of bread.

They were still talking about all this when Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!' In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts rising in your hearts? Look at my hands and feet; yes, it is I indeed. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this he showed them his hands and feet. Their joy was so great that they still could not believe it, and they stood there dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes.

Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms has to be fulfilled.' He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'So you see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.'

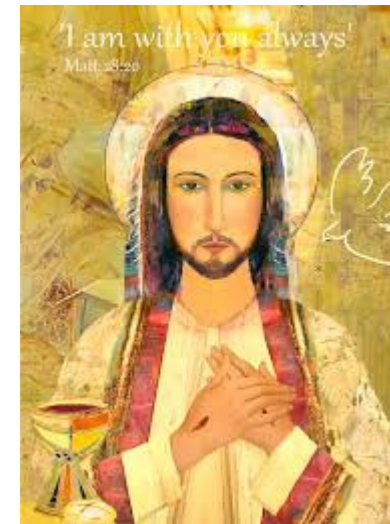
Today's Gospel passage is Luke's official account of the appearance of the risen Lord. Notice, all the disciples are together. It is not just the word of one person. This is the testimony of the Church. Jesus invites them to see and to touch. Notice the emotions of the disciples. First there is fear & alarm, then...their joy was so great...they were dumbfounded. Jesus even asks for food, so that he may eat. They are not dreaming. It is not just in their imagination. Jesus, who suffered, died and was buried, is truly present in their midst. Let us be nourished on God's word and grow strong in our Easter faith

Third Sunday of Easter

Year B

18th April 2021

He is living in our midst



On this, the Third Sunday of Easter, Luke invites us to witness the Risen Lord; to recognise him in our midst, to be healed of our sins and strengthened in our Easter faith. However, this faith, this joy, isn't to be kept to ourselves. It must change our lives, and the lives of everyone we meet. It must bring about God's reign!

Opening Prayer

May your people exult for ever, O God, in renewed youthfulness of spirit, so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption, we may look forward in confident hope to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection.

Acts 3:13-15,17-19

Peter said to the people: 'You are Israelites, and it is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, who has glorified his servant Jesus, the same Jesus you handed over and then disowned in the presence of Pilate after Pilate had decided to release him. It was you who accused the Holy One, the Just One, you who demanded the reprieve of a murderer while you killed the prince of life. God, however, raised him from the dead, and to that fact we are the witnesses.'

'Now I know, brothers, that neither you nor your leaders had any idea what you were really doing; this was the way God carried out what he had foretold, when he said through all his prophets that his Christ would suffer. Now you must repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out.'

Today's passage from the Acts of the Apostles, follows the healing of a lame man (3: 1-10). We are told that everyone comes running to Peter & John in great excitement after seeing the miracle and Peter uses the opportunity to preach to them. He teaches that Jesus is the fulfilment of the scriptures and that it was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, 'the God of our ancestors', who raised him to new life, after they had put him to death. He now calls on them to repent, to turn to God. Let us take Peter's words to heart, recognising the times we have turned away from the Lord. Let us turn back and seek the Lord today.

Psalm 4:2,4,7,9

Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

When I call, answer me, O God of justice;

from anguish you released me, have mercy and hear me!

*It is the Lord who grants favours to those whom he loves;
the Lord hears me whenever I call him.*

'What can bring us happiness?' many say.

Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

1 John 2:1-5

I am writing this, my children, to stop you sinning; but if anyone should sin, we have our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who is just; he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away, and not only ours, but the whole world's.

We can be sure that we know God only by keeping his commandments. Anyone who says, 'I know him', and does not keep his commandments, is a liar, refusing to admit the truth. But when anyone does obey what he has said, God's love comes to perfection in him.

Today's Second Reading is attributed to John, the author of the Fourth Gospel. It was written to Christian communities in Asia, which were threatened with disintegration under the impact of early heresies. In today's short passage, John stresses that now that we have been saved, we should remain faithful to the Lord by keeping his Commandments. However, if we should fall, we have an advocate in Christ Jesus, for he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away.

Reflect on these powerful images: Jesus our 'Advocate', pleading our cause before the Father; and Jesus the 'Sacrifice' that takes our sins away.

Alleluia, alleluia! *Lord Jesus, explain the Scriptures to us.
Make our hearts burn within us as you talk to us. Alleluia!*

(Gospel overleaf)

Prayer over the Offerings

Receive, O Lord, we pray, these offerings of your exultant Church, and, as you have given her cause for such great gladness, grant also that the gifts we bring may bear fruit in perpetual happiness.

Prayer after Communion

Look with kindness upon your people, O Lord, and grant, we pray, that those you were pleased to renew by eternal mysteries may attain in their flesh the incorruptible glory of the resurrection.