

Third Sunday of Easter

[Reading I: Acts 3:13-15, 17-19](#)

[Responsorial Psalm: 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9](#)

[Reading II: 1 John 2:1-5a](#)

[Gospel: Luke 24:35-48](#)

Readings may be found on the US Bishop's website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/041424.cfm>



In the first reading, the speech of Peter follows the healing of the "crippled" man who begged from those entering the temple. People gather to see what had happened to the man, and Peter preaches to them the basic Gospel message.

The God of Israel (of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) has raised and glorified Jesus. He uses some very ancient titles of Jesus: Holy and Righteous One, and Author of Life. He explains that they acted in ignorance in turning Jesus over to Pilate and asked for a murderer to be released during Passover. Peter calls upon the words of the prophets that now offer new insight into the suffering and death of Jesus. The common expectation was that the Messiah would be victorious over all enemies, as was King David. The death of Jesus caused real confusion, and for some, it was a sign that Jesus could not possibly be the Messiah. God would not allow this to happen if He was God's chosen one. For Peter, the resurrection was God overturning human judgment and showing that Jesus was the true Messiah sent by God.

Peter also calls them to conversion, a turning around, the start of a new direction in life. Their old ways of thinking and living could not produce anything more than what their life offered today. This new start, turning to Jesus, will be the way to be cleansed of sin and find something more, a life where forgiveness is given.

The First Letter of John continues the challenge to those who say one only needs to believe, to hold the truth intellectually. This passage calls one into a faith relationship with God in which a person entrusts himself or herself to God. No individual controls his or her salvation. When one fails, God does not reject us. Jesus offers forgiveness to us. He is given the title Advocate. An advocate speaks on behalf of another, using their knowledge of the law and the legal system to assist another before a judge. Jesus, seated at the right hand of the Father (which we profess in the Nicene Creed), intercedes and advocates on our behalf. He is the faithful son who knows our weakness and who is God. Jesus uses his position and expertise to advocate for us. Jesus also brings forgiveness to the whole human race. God's forgiveness is not restrictive or limited. All who accept it are forgiven.

When one lives a relationship in harmony with God, God's work will be brought to perfection in that person. Keeping the commands of God is a sign of this. The key command in the church communities in the Johannine circles is "Love one another."

The Gospel passage is from Luke this week rather than John, which supplies all the other gospel readings during Easter. It follows the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, which is read in cycle A. The two disciples have returned to Jerusalem after walking in the other direction all day. While they are sharing their experience, Jesus is there with them. He manifests that he is not a ghost by inviting them to touch him and then eating a piece of fish with them. The resurrection is genuine and not just a vision. Life is transformed, not ended in death.

As in similar accounts, Jesus explains the scriptures and opens their minds to understand them. This is also an invitation to us to turn to God for understanding. We cannot understand on our own. Only with God's help will this make sense.

Second, there is the awareness that even in their confusion Jesus is with them, whether they see him or not. This awareness is important for us as well. No matter what situation one is in, Jesus is with you. When one faces confusion or uncertainty, pause to remember that Jesus is with you.

Thirdly, the disciples and each of us are commissioned to announce this saving message. This is not simply an invitation to preach but to announce God's saving love by the way one lives. One's witness in the challenges of daily life; how one forgives others; and how one reaches out to the unpopular are all proclamations of the new life of the resurrection. Human society without God, what John calls the "World," is the life that many people lead. As members of the people who have been reborn, we show different practices, concerns, and attitudes. Christians are invited to be Christ in the world today, and to do this, one must put on the mind of Christ.

Themes:

Redemption - Conversion - Forgiveness
Evangelization – Heart of the Gospel

Living Faith -trusting reliance
Jesus constant presence

Reflection Questions:

What are some titles for Jesus that are significant to you?

How have you experienced conversion? What does being converted mean to you?

How is discipleship manifest in your life?

What helps you in the forgiving process?

What helps you to be aware of God's presence with you?

Prayer Suggestions:

For the Church: that the Spirit will open our minds to understand the Scriptures and empower us to share the message of God's love and forgiveness with all whom we encounter

For the grace of forgiveness: that we will be open to God's free and generous forgiveness, and strive to forgive others as we have been forgiven

For the grace of recognition: that we may come to know Jesus in the breaking of the Bread and the sharing of the scriptures so that we may be dynamic disciples

For the gift of faith: that we will depend more fully on God in every aspect of our lives and grow in our confidence that God who will never abandon us

For all who are broken and wounded: that they may find healing in Christ and that our awareness of the wounds of Christ may help us grow in compassion and understanding