

Scripture Study

Third Sunday of Easter– Cycle C



Opening prayer

Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41

(Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-13)

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19

Overview of the Gospel:

- This Sunday's Gospel reading takes place sometime after Jesus' second Resurrection appearance on the Sunday after Easter. The disciples have gone from Jerusalem, returning home to the Galilee region, and decide to resume their occupations as fisherman on the Sea of Tiberias (also called the Sea of Galilee or Lake Gennesaret depending on which shore of the lake you were standing. See Mark 1:16 and Luke 5:1).
- After an unsuccessful night of fishing, Jesus appears on the shore. As in other appearances of Jesus (Luke 24:16; John 20:14), the disciples don't recognize him.
- Jesus then causes a miraculous catch of fish to appear, which must have reminded the disciples of one of their early encounters with him (Luke 5:11). At this point they recognize him and rush ashore to meet him, impetuous Peter leading the way.
- Jesus goes on to remind them of many other things and to deliver a prediction.

Questions:

- Reflecting on the First Reading, have you ever encountered opposition because of your religious beliefs? Did your attitude resemble that of the Apostles on this occasion?
- In the Second Reading, who is being referred to as "the Lamb"? What does it tell you about who is being praised and honored and why?
- In the Gospel, what might the disciples been discussing on the 90-mile journey from Jerusalem, after the Resurrection appearance (John 20:26), on their way to Galilee?
- In deciding to go fishing, do you think St. Peter just wanted something to do, or did he return to his old business for some other reason?
- Why did Jesus' followers have trouble recognizing him after the Resurrection?
- Why do you think Jesus repeated the same question and charge to Peter three times (John 13:36-38; 18:15-18, 25-27)? How is Peter expected to demonstrate his love and loyalty to Jesus from now on? In light of Ezekiel 34 and John 10:15, what would Jesus' shepherd imagery mean to Peter?
- What are verses 18 and 19 a prediction of? How has God's call in your life led you to places, circumstances, or relationships you would rather have avoided? How has that been a "death" to self? How have you used it to glorify God?

Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 645, 448, 553, 881, 1429, 618

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 found in the bulletin!

"After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias"

Scripture: *John 21:1-19*

Meditation: Why didn't the apostles immediately recognize the Lord when he greeted them at the Sea of Tiberias? John gives us a clue. He states that Peter decided to return to his home district of Galilee, very likely so he could resume his fishing career. Peter was discouraged and didn't know what to do after the tragedy of Jesus' death! He went back to his previous career out of despair and uncertainty. The other apostles followed him back to Galilee. When was the last time Peter was commanded to let down his net after a futile night of fishing? It was at the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee when the Lord dramatically approached Peter in his fishing boat after a futile night of fishing and commanded him to lower his nets (see Luke 5:4-11). After the miraculous catch, Jesus told Peter that he would be 'catching people' for the kingdom of God. Now Jesus repeats the same miracle. John, the beloved disciple, is the first to recognize the Lord. Peter impulsively leaps from the boat and runs to the Lord. Do you run to the Lord when you meet setbacks, disappointments, or trials? The Lord is ever ready to renew us in faith and to give us fresh hope in his promises.

Skeptics who disbelieve the resurrection say the disciples only saw a vision of Jesus. The gospels, however, give us a vivid picture of the reality of the resurrection. Jesus went out of his way to offer



his disciples various proofs of his resurrection – that he is real and true flesh, not just a spirit or ghost. In his third appearance to the apostles, after Jesus performed the miraculous catch of fish, he prepared a breakfast and ate with them. Peter's prompt recognition of the Master and exclamation— "It is the Lord!"— stands in sharp contrast to his previous denial of his Master during the night of arrest. The Lord Jesus reveals himself to each of us as we open our hearts to receive his word. Do you recognize the Lord's presence in your life and do you receive his word with faith?

Why did Jesus question Peter's love and fidelity three times in front of the other apostles? It must have caused Peter pain and sorrow since he had publicly denied Jesus three times. Now Peter, full of remorse and humility, unequivocally stated that he loved his master and was willing to serve him whatever it might cost. When Jesus asks him "do you love me more than these?" he may have pointed to the boats, nets and catch of fish. He may have challenged Peter to abandon his work for the

task of shepherding God's people. Jesus also may have pointed to the other disciples and to Peter's previous boast: "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away" (Matthew 26:33). Peter now makes no boast or comparison but humbly responds: "You know I love you".

The Lord calls us, even in our weakness and sin, to love him above all else. Augustine in his *Confessions* wrote: "*Late have I loved you, O Beauty so ancient and so new. Late have I loved you! ... You shone your Self upon me to drive away my blindness. You breathed your fragrance upon me... and in astonishment I drew my breath... now I pant for you! I tasted you, and now I hunger and thirst for you. You touched me! – and I burn to live within your peace.*" (Confessions 10:27) Nothing but our sinful pride and willfulness can keep us from the love of God. It is a free gift unmerited and beyond payment. We can never outmatch God in love. He loved us first and our love for him is a response to his exceeding graciousness and mercy. Do you allow God's love to change and transform your heart?

"Lord Jesus, inflame my heart with your love and remove everything that is unloving, unkind, ungrateful, unholy and not in accord with your will."

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