

Lectionary Faith-Sharing Community

**THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

Cycle B - April 18, 2021

**OPENING PRAYER**



Guide: *Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.*

All: **Let the house of Israel say, "His mercy endures forever"**

Leader: Let those who fear the Lord say, "His mercy endures forever."

All: **Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.**



Guide: *We invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit:*

**Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send, Lord your spirit and renew the face of the earth. Oh God, that you have instructed the hearts of your faithful with the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us through the same spirit that always enjoy her divine consolation. By Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**FIRST READING** [ Acts 3 (13-15), (17-19) ]

***Peter said to the people:***

***"The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and denied in Pilate's presence when he had decided to release him. You denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you.***

***The author of life you put to death, but God raised him from the dead; of this we are witnesses. Now I know, brothers, that you acted out of ignorance, just as your leaders did; but God has thus brought to fulfillment what he had announced beforehand through the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer.***

***Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away."***

This week we have a text that contains one of Peter's sermons, after feeling accompanied by the Spirit of God (which he had received on the day of Pentecost). This sermon contains more or less the same elements of what constituted the first preaching of the Gospel: The Kerygma. That it is nothing other than "The Paschal Mystery" of Jesus Christ. Or, in simpler words, a compilation of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, as part of a Plan of Salvation from which all humanity has been elevated to the level of children of God with the right to dwell with Him in the Paradise.

The Gospel that was preached in the early days does not speak of the life of Jesus, nor of his birth, nor of his miracles, nor of his parables. It contains what is expressed in this sermon by Peter. To better understand this, one of the questions for this meeting asks us to compare this with other of Peter's sermons in the same book of the Acts of the Apostles.

The apostles personally experienced encounters with the risen Jesus Christ, and for this they can give an unquestionable witness. After having experienced this wonder, they wish that others would too. Let others also believe. That is why it reads somewhere «... *we cannot remain silent, we feel the need to tell everything* ...». Therefore, the apostles invite all the time to have faith in Jesus Christ. The reaction they ask for is then a conversion, and the main consequence is the forgiveness of sins.

(1) Read Peter's sermons: 2:32-39; 4:8-12; 5:29-32; 10:39-43 What expressions they have in common with this passage from the first reading? What is the most repeated theme?

(2) As in the time of Jesus, some Church leaders have made mistakes. Pope John Paul II asked forgiveness for the errors of the men of the Church throughout its history. What do you think about this?

(3) Sometimes in life, as the text says "we have acted out of ignorance" and harmed others. Are we aware of this? Do we acknowledge having caused any harm? How can we repair the damage done?

(4) Peter calls Jesus "author of life." What do you think he meant by that?

(5) From Peter's sermon we find that even those who have rejected Jesus Christ can be forgiven. What do you think about this?

## SECOND READING [ 1 John 2 (1-5) ]

***My children, I am writing this to you so that you may not commit sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one. He is expiation for our sins, and not for our sins only but for those of the whole world.***

***The way we may be sure that we know him is to keep his commandments.***

***Those who say, "I know him," but do not keep his commandments are liars, and the truth is not in them. But whoever keeps his word, the love of God is truly perfected in him.***

In various New Testament writings the Good News is repeated to us, according to which, thanks to the death of Jesus Christ, we have received the forgiveness of our sins. In the rituals of Judaism the offerings of animals were foreseen to ask God for forgiveness, but after the Redemption, it is no longer necessary, since the sacrifice of Jesus Christ has been sufficient for all humanity that has existed, exists and will exist. .

This first letter from John also touches on this subject. He relates it to what our response should be. We must be consistent when living a faith learned from Jesus Christ, whom in these lines he calls "intercessor." An intermediary who does not cease to act on our behalf, as long as we fulfill a simple commandment, which is to practice love. It is all that is asked of us. To love.

- (1) What draws your attention the most in this text? Why?
- (2) According to Saint John, what are the requirements for those who know Jesus Christ?
- (3) Read 1 John 4:20-21 and compare with this text.
- (4) Read 1 John 3:15. What do you think of this expression? Did you know it? Share your impressions with the group.

## GOSPEL [ Luke 24 (35-48) ]

***The two disciples recounted what had taken place on the way, and how Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of bread.***

***While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost.***

***Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.***

***While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them.***

***He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled."***

***Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."***



The texts dedicated to the resurrection of Jesus Christ are different in each of the Gospels. The account of the episode of the disciples of Emmaus is found only in Luke. However, the text that is proclaimed this Sunday does not contain the narrative of this event, but what happened immediately afterwards. Only the Evangelist Mark makes reference to this event, although he limits it to two verses: Mk 16:12-13. It would not be a bad idea to read the text from verse 13 of the same chapter in the Gospel of Luke.

The Emmaus couple (it is not said in the text if they were both male, so it could also be assumed that it was a married couple), had heard about the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a rumor and it seems that they had not given it much importance, so that when they verify it with their own eyes, they do not wait for the night (which would be the most prudent thing to do) and risk returning to Jerusalem immediately to share the news.

Lucas's account implies that the Risen One is not some kind of ghost, since he eats with the couple. (You can read the reflection that Saint Paul makes on the body of the risen one in 1 Corinthians 15:35-50).

Another very interesting detail in the Emmaus episode narrative is the emphasis on the importance of Scripture. To know Jesus Christ better, it is not enough for others to preach it to you, for others to explain it to you. It is very healthy for the spirit to be exposed to the Word of God. In addition to the sacraments, it is an infallible means to not only draw closer to the Lord, but also to learn to allow ourselves to be shaped by his wisdom.

A conclusion from the reflection of this passage could be that Christian faith and reflection is based on the paschal experience of the disciples and on an ever deeper understanding of Christ and of Scripture, which are two realities that mutually illuminate each other because both are instruments of God's revelation.

- (1) Do you feel or have you felt anguish in your soul, like that felt by the disciples? Have you felt or do you feel like you are in a dead end?
- (2) Why do you think the risen Jesus always greets with "peace to you"?
- (3) Jesus says in the text: "Touch and be convinced." What is easier for you: trying to reach God who is in heaven, or Jesus Christ who can be by your side?
- (4) How does it feel to discover from the Scriptures that we believe in a God who has experienced sorrows like ours?
- (5) What was the reaction of the disciples when they recognized Jesus Christ? Have you had a similar experience?
- (6) Read Luke 24:13-34, that is, the text that comes before this week's passage. How do you find this story related to knowledge of the scriptures?

### CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Lord of the day and night, of the beginning and of the end: At the closing of this meeting, once again we lift up our hearts to You, divine source of all life.*

All: **We thank you for the gifts you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the love expressed in companionship and understanding, mutual respect and shared ideas. We give you thanks for your holy power that will help us in our concerns that we have shared. For these and all the gifts that come from You, we give you thanks.**

Leader: *Lord hear our prayers* (attendees can propose their own needs of prayer)

All: **In the same way in which we have being blessed by your presence as we meet, we ask now to bless our safe return to our homes. May your holy blessing be over us + in the name of the Father ...**

Leader: *May the King of the eternal glory gather us together in His heavenly banquet. Amen.*