



parish newsletter

Third Sunday of Easter (Year B) | 18 April 2021

Reflecting on the Gospel



3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER

We often act out of ignorance. Armed with the best of intentions, we think we are seeing clearly and correctly, but we are not. We don't always understand the full meaning of things

and only perceive part of the truth. Hence, our judgements and actions can be impaired by myopic, incomplete or erroneous perceptions. The meaning of life, under-

standing of human experience, and negotiating life's challenges can all become skewed without proper understanding and vision. The resurrection of Christ is the corrective to

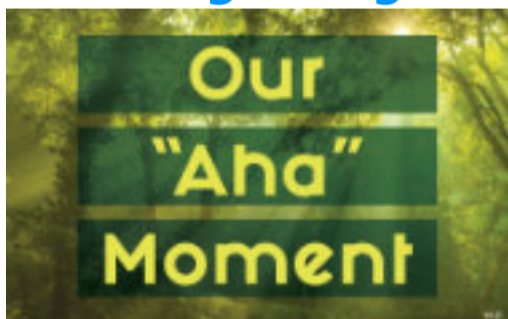
our incomplete and limited view of life. Looking at things with the eyes of faith brings a depth of clarity and understanding to how we see God, ourselves, others, and the

world. Even the disciples struggled with their limited understanding and ignorant perceptions. It was only when Jesus opened their minds to understand the Scriptures that their eyes were opened. It was their "aha" moment when everything clicked. We all want the substance of our lives to come together, make sense, and have meaning. This is easier to achieve when things are going positively, and life is good. It is when suffering, disappointment, death, hardship, and injustice enter the picture that things can become unsettled and disoriented. Our faith in the goodness and love of God is tested. We tend to shift our focus on these difficult and challenging moments and do not see them within the greater picture of how God intends life to unfold. We can gain, from the passion and resurrection of Christ, the clear vision we need in order to move away from ignorance to enlightenment.

We need our "aha" moment when everything

comes together and clicks. It can come in a fleeting instant when we feel totally connected with God, where we find ourselves, others and all of creation. It is a moment when all is right and good, regardless of how difficult our journey. Our "aha" moment assures us that God is here, right with us, in us and around us bringing us a gift and blessing we can receive nowhere else: peace. In those brief sacramental encounters when we are lifted up out of ourselves and centred, we can hear God say, "peace be with you," and we feel secure. It's all okay. The resurrected Christ has the power to bring this gift to us. Some people, as they are facing their deaths, remark about this peace. When looking into the window of eternity, they experience a depth of joy and are amazed at God's goodness and closeness. We are called to be witnesses to this Good News.

Everyday Stewardship



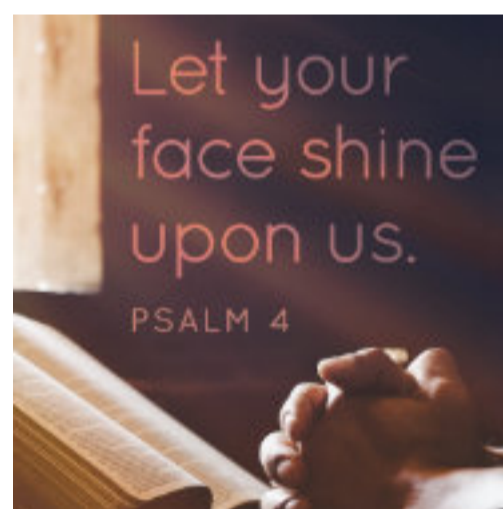
ations. If we do not know the needs of the other or the responses expected in living out the relationship, we easily create division and separation. I do certain things for my children because I am a parent. I respond in certain ways to my wife based upon her needs. If I am oblivious, or just don't care, the relationship will move on a path toward hurt, pain, and in some instances, permanent separation.

To know Jesus is to love Jesus. The key is you actually have to know him. Knowing him is listening to his words and keeping his commands. Just like in all relationships, we will fall short at times. However, because we know the expectations we can then make amends and continue to grow together. So if I asked you to tell me about this friend of yours named Jesus, what would you say?

Tracey Earl Welliver, MTS

If you ask me to tell you about one of my sons, my daughter, or my wife, I could spend quite some time elaborating on them as individuals and my interactions with them throughout the years. An authentic relationship leads each party into a rich knowledge of the other. If I have little to say about someone other than some incidental information or gossip, I cannot claim to really know him or her.

Indeed, every relationship has expect-



Live the Liturgy

There are many people we admire or revere whom we will never see in person: athletes, artists, actors, etc. We enjoy their work and accomplishments and read about their lives in books and magazines. We sometimes get so involved in who they are that we almost feel like we know them. We may be their biggest fans and then share our love of them with others. We do all of this, yet we have never even seen them in the flesh with our own eyes.

Some think this is the way with Jesus. They believe he is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, but he is still someone up in heaven, and we will get a chance to see him "for real" when we die or when he comes again. They may even say that until those times occur, he resides only in our hearts.

But those in the Gospels saw who he was in the breaking of the bread. And today, in 2021, he is here in our midst for all eyes to see. He is here really and truly every time we break the bread. There is no need for worship from afar. Just open your eyes.

The disciples told of how they recognised Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel Acclamation	Gospel
	The author of life you put to death, but God raised him from the dead; of this we are witnesses. (Acts 3:15)	Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord. (Ps 4)	He is expiation for our sins, and not for our sins only but for those of the whole world. (1 Jn 2:2)	Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus said: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.' Alleluia!	'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. (Lk 24:46-47)

Masses this Week

18	THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER	Acts 3:13-15, 17-19/Ps 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9 [7a]/1 Jn 2:1-5a/Lk 24:35-4
		10.30 Mass St Mary's Margaret Atkinson
		17.00 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish
19	Monday	Acts 6:8-15/Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30 [1ab]/Jn 6:22-29
		12.05 Mass St Mary's Sr M Cyril (RIP)
20	Tuesday	Acts 7:51—8:1a/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 7b and 8a, 17 and 21ab [6a]/Jn 6:30-35
		12.05 Mass St Mary's Tom Simmons (RIP)
21	Wednesday St Anselm	Acts 8:1b-8/Ps 66:1-3a, 4-5, 6-7a [1]/Jn 6:35-40
		12.05 Mass St Mary's Sr M Cyril (RIP)
22	Thursday	Acts 8:26-40/Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20 [1]/Jn 6:44-51
		12.05 Mass St Mary's Joyce Mitchell (RIP)
23	ST GEORGE, PATRON OF ENGLAND	Acts 9:1-20/Ps 117:1bc, 2 [Mk 16:15]/Jn 6:52-59
		12.05 Mass St Mary's Sheila Pye (RIP)
24	Saturday St Adalbert; St Fidelis	Acts 9:31-42/Ps 116:12-13, 14-15, 16-17 [12]/Jn 6:60-69
		11.00 Mass St Mary's Deceased of the NHS
		18:00 Vigil Mass St Cecilia's Rita & George Young (RIP)
25	FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	Acts 4:8-12/Ps 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29 [22]/1 Jn 3:1-2/Jn 10:11-18
		10.30 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish
		17.00 Mass St Mary's Sheila Burnikell (RIP)



Christopher, Paula, Liz, Peter, Emilia, Jean, Teresa and Cath.



Those whose anniversaries occur at this time.

If you would like a name added to our prayer list, please email or call the parish office.



News & Announcements

Gift Aid Envelopes

The envelopes for the new financial year are available at the back of the church for collection. Please take yours if you haven't already.

The stewardship committee will be preparing a financial report to share with parishioners in the next few weeks. It is important that we all know how much the parish raises and how that money is spent. This is especially important because of the financial problems the coronavirus and the lockdowns caused.

We are fortunate that so many parishioners decided to set up a standing order for their weekly collection. That, along with the gift aid envelopes and the loose collection has helped cushion the financial impact of 2020,

and kept us able to pay our bills. Thank-you for your generosity.

Weekly Reflections

We're posting a weekly reflection on the Sunday readings on our Facebook and YouTube pages. The reflections give us the change to keep the message of the Sunday readings alive throughout the week. Take a look.

It's a quiet week!

There's no escaping the fact that its a quiet week and there isn't much to announce! That's not a bad thing and it gives us the chance to pause and say 'thank-you God for the gift of our faith!'

Flock Notes

"They recognised him at the breaking of the bread". That's how Luke's Gospel tells us the disciples on the road to Emmaus eventually recognised Jesus: when he broke bread with them.

That gesture of breaking bread recalls what Jesus did on the night of the Last Supper: he took bread, blessed it, *broke it* and gave it to his disciples to eat. In the early church the act of breaking bread was so closely tied to the Eucharist that in the *Acts of the Apostles*, we hear it called 'the breaking of bread' more than any other name. So why is breaking bread so important and why did the disciples only recognise Jesus once the bread had been broken?

The first reason is that the broken bread is the body of Christ and that body was broken on the cross. When we see the bread broken we are reminded of the Cross. Too often Christians tend to skip over the 'unpleasantness' of Good Friday on their rush to Easter. However, all the gospels are clear: we can't hope to understand who Jesus is and what he has done for us without confronting the reality of the cross. Jesus



isn't just the Christ, he's the crucified and risen Christ. Without the crucifixion, our understanding of Jesus is lop-sided and incomplete.

The second reason, I think, also has to do with the reason Jesus came among us: to share his life. Bread symbolises life in so many cultures because it is the staple food of millions of people, even today. However, bread has to be broken in order to eat it—if you put a whole loaf in your mouth you'll choke! But bread doesn't just have to be broken so that we can eat it, it has to be broken so that it can be shared with others, so that they can eat. The whole earthly life of Jesus—from his incarnation to his ascension—was one great act of sharing, a pouring out of his divine life upon us who put our faith and hope in him.

In the breaking of the bread the disciples on the road to Emmaus and the first Christians recognised

the one whose body was broken on the cross and whose life was given completely so that they could share in his divine life. In the presence of that reality they could only give thanks, which is why the name Eucharist, thanksgiving, eventually arose.

Twenty centuries later when we gather for the Eucharist we do what Jesus did the night of the last supper: we take bread at the offertory, we bless it at the Eucharistic prayer, we break it at the Lamb of God, and give it at Holy Communion.

When the priest breaks the bread we are transported back to that encounter with the Risen Lord on the road to Emmaus, and like the disciples, we are invited to recognise his presence in that action. This invitation to encounter Jesus is offered at each Mass we celebrate and, if we allow it to, the encounter deepens the gifts of life and love Jesus offers us.

More than that, however, each Mass is an encounter with the body of Christ broken on the cross and shared out for others. Mass then, is also an invitation to us who put our faith in him to do the same.

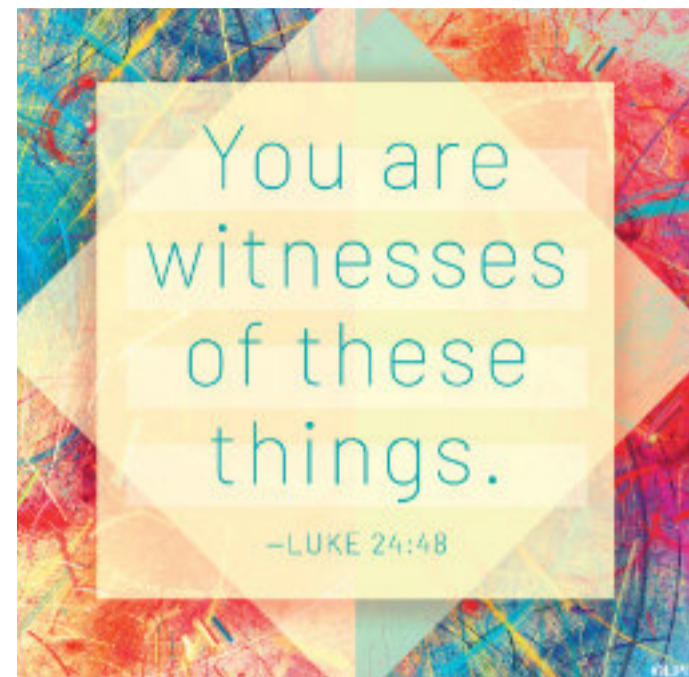


Questions for the Week

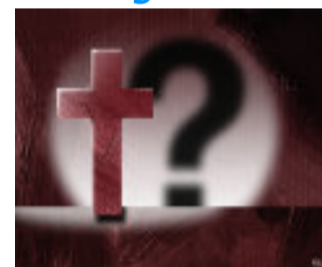
First Reading: By publicly bearing witness to Jesus' resurrection, Peter urged the people to repent of their sin of ignorance and their denial of Jesus. How does Jesus' resurrection from the dead inspire you to repentance?

Second Reading: John teaches his community that the key to avoiding sin is to follow Jesus' commandments. What do you find challenging in this seemingly simple and clear instruction?

Gospel: Luke tells us the resurrected Jesus opened the minds of the disciples 'to understand the scriptures' and see how his suffering, death and resurrection was connected to repentance and forgiveness of sins. What tools do you use to better understand our faith?



Why do we do that?



Question: Do children need to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before their First Communion?

Answer: For centuries the Catholic Church has taught that a person needs

to be in a state of grace (free from mortal sins) in order to worthily receive the Eucharist. To that end, Catholics should make an effort to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation any time they recognise the need for the sacrament (and in keeping with the precept of the Church that asks that we celebrate this sacrament at least once each year).

In the case of children preparing for their First Communion, the Code of Canon Law is very clear that they should also celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving the Eucharist for the first time: "It is the responsibility, in the first place, of parents and those who take the place of parents as well as of the pastor to see that children who have reached the use of reason are correctly prepared and are nourished by the divine food as early as possible, preceded by sacramental confession" (Canon 914).

While some might question the significance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation — especially in the case of children who might not fully understand the reality of sin or the meaning of the sacrament itself — a child's "First Confession" can be a wonderful time for families to reflect together on the quality of their relationships, how they put their faith into practice, and, when it is possible, to celebrate the sacrament as a family. In the end, the celebration of these two sacraments marks important moments in the spiritual journeys of children and we hope their "First Confession" and "First Communion" help instil in them a love of the sacraments of the Church.

Easter Prayer of St Hippolytus of Rome

Christ is Risen: The world below lies desolate
 Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen
 Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing
 Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty
 Christ is Risen indeed from the dead,
 the first of the sleepers,
 Glory and power are his forever and ever.

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