



Third Sunday of Easter April 26, 2020

Introduction

Today's gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

You may want to have a small bowl of water available to remind you of your baptism!

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are raised with him to new life.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God,

for in the beginning you created us in your image
and planted us in a well-watered garden.

In the desert you promised pools of water for the parched,
and you gave us water from the rock.

When we did not know the way,
you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters.

At the cross, you watered us from Jesus' wounded side,
and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.

We praise you for your salvation through water,
and for all water everywhere.

Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love.

Satisfy the thirsty, and give us the life only you can give.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

The Day of Resurrection

Listen and sing along [here](#).

Prayer of the Day

O God, your Son makes himself known to all his disciples in the breaking of bread. Open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in his redeeming work, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Today's reading is the conclusion of Peter's sermon preached following the giving of the Holy Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The center of his preaching is the bold declaration that God has made the crucified Jesus both Lord and Christ.

Read the text [here](#).

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-23

The imagery of exile is used to help the readers of this letter understand that they are strangers in a strange land. Christians no longer belong to this age. Through the death of Christ we belong to God, so that our focus, faith, and hope are no longer on such things as silver or gold.

Read the text [here](#).

Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

The colorful story of Jesus' appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus answers the question of how Jesus is to be recognized among us. Here, he is revealed through the scriptures and in the breaking of bread.

Read the text [here](#).

Reflection on the Text

This is one of my favorite resurrection stories. It seems both unrealistic in that how could they not recognize Jesus, to very realistic when Jesus breaks bread and they suddenly know who it is! How could you listen to this person talk for however long they were on the road without knowing who it was? You would think they would have recognized him by the way he taught, if nothing else.

This is similar to the story in the Gospel of John where Mary meets Jesus in the Garden but does not recognize Jesus until he speaks her name. Mary thinks he is the gardener, possibly the one who rolled the stone away. She has no clue who he is, until he speaks her name.

Here in Luke, Jesus walks the Road to Emmaus with two of his followers, and they do not recognize him until he breaks bread at the table. Again, they had plenty of time to recognize him, and surely the way he taught should have been familiar, but they still did not know who it was.

For us, there are many times that we are caught up in "God moments" and we do not recognize them for what they are until much later, and sometimes not until someone points it out to us. These are times when God is so clearly present that we should be able to see it, but sometimes it is not until later, or when someone points out God's presence to us that we realize that God is or was present in that moment! Of course, sometimes it is obvious, but I find that many times it is not until later that we realize it.

For example, have you ever wondered how you got out of a particularly bad situation on your own? But when you look back you realize that you really were not on your own? Or when you are having one of those days and someone, sometimes a perfect stranger, says or does just the right thing to turn your day around? Those are God moments, times when God is there – very present in our lives and we do not realize it until later. Much like the disciples or Mary.

Part of our problem is just like Cleopas and his friend in our text for today – we get so caught up in our own stuff – guilt, sorrow, being too busy, too tired, that we just cannot see what is going on around us. God is always with us, and present with us, and active in our lives, but we cannot see it.

During this time where we are home more and possibly less busy, we might be able to work on our prayer lives, and we might find that we can see more of these God moments in our lives. If we can expand our prayer time each day, we might find that we feel God's presence more as well. If you find that you do, I hope you will share them with us, and with others.

Whether we noticed God's presence at the time, or if we needed someone to point it out to us, we should remember that no matter what, God is always present with us. Whether we are looking for Jesus at the tomb, or talking to a stranger on the road, or being helped over a dark spot in our day by someone we don't know, God is present. God is with us at all times and in all places. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Hymn of the Day

Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing

Listen and sing along [here](#).

Nicene Creed

We profess our faith with the whole church in all times and places:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,

**was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

For those whose hearts are fervent with love for your gospel, that they are empowered to tell the story of your love in their lives and to show hospitality in response to this love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the diverse natural world: for jungles, prairies, forests, valleys, mountains, and for all the wild and endangered animals who call these spaces home, that they are nurtured and protected. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For broken systems we have inherited and that we continue to perpetuate, forgive us. Restrain the nations from fighting over limited resources. Redeem us from the cycles of scarcity and violence. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For all who call upon your healing name, give rest. Stay with us, and walk with all those who are hungry, friendless, despairing, and desiring healing in body and spirit (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the faith forming ministries of this church. For those preparing for baptism, first communion, confirmation, and membership (*especially*). For those who participate in Sunday school and adult education; guide and inspire learners of every age and ability. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Create in our hearts a yearning to rest in your promise of eternal and resurrected life. Give us thankful hearts for those who have died, even as we look forward to the hope of new life with you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Hymn

Christ the Lord is Risen Today; Alleluia!

Listen and sing along [here](#).

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Today's reflection was written by Pastor Ray Sipe.