

EASTER 2015

Third Sunday of Easter - April 19

Easter in us! It is not so important if you know the correct version of the Bible, but rather that you be the correct version of the Bible.

An Easter Newsletter

Number 3, April 19, 2015

Third Sunday readings:

AA 3,
13-15,17-19

1 Jn. 2, 1-5

Lk. 24, 35-48

We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous

He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins



Not only for ours only but for the sins of the whole world



We may be sure we know him if we obey his commandment

Whoever says, I abide in him ought to walk just as he walked



EASTER IN US!

The story of the resurrected Jesus does not challenge our imagination as the death and suffering do. Rather, the resurrected Jesus is the revelation and the sharing of the risen Son of God among us. The resurrection is about the work of Jesus in our own time and space.

The fifty days of the Easter season are given to the Church to unpack the implications of the Resurrection here and how. We

If you have some hesitation and doubt, remember it will always be the resurrected Jesus who will challenge you to believe.

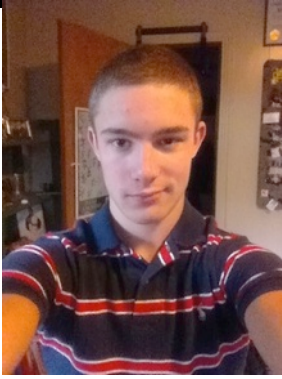
must always stress that there was a definite moment for the actual resurrection in history but the resurrection must always be an event that occurs within the life and prayer of the believers. If you live in the high Arctic or if you live in downtown Vancouver, Jesus must be risen in your life. There must be a strong personal dimension to the resurrection.

Take each one of the resurrection stories that are shared during this Easter season. Use your imagination and stand beside the

disciples when they experience Jesus. Hear his words with our own ears in 2015.

Allow nothing to block you from knowing and living the resurrection of Jesus. It will be through your prayer, your Sunday Eucharist and your service to the poor of this world that Jesus will be made present. Be brave! Step forward with Christ.





THE CHURCH MUST DISCOVER BAPTISM

There comes a time in every human group when the present practices no longer ring true to life. A good example would be to have a birthday cake at work where the foreman does not care to know your name. You are just a piece of the production machinery. A birthday cake (which demands friendship and concern for one another) in this work situation would be as welcome as a pitbull on the local school playground. A cake would not fit here.

The first Christians would be shocked to see that people would want to bring their children to the church, have the water poured and then never pray with or work with the people of faith. This would clash with their understanding of what it means to be baptized.

First you become a Christian (i.e., a follower of Jesus) and then you seal it publically in the waters of baptism. The prayers and the waters come at the end of the process of conversion and commitment. Today, when people begin to hear what it actually means to be baptized they back

away. Faith has become so diluted that it means trying to find some priest who will pour the waters on my baby and call that baptism. How far we have drifted from the original meaning of Baptism?

Does it make any sense to have water on a child's forehead if you have parents and families who clearly do not want to have anything to do with the life and prayer of the faith community?

Go back to the first Christians. They had it right!

First, the people of the Church must call you to believe. They must demand that you put into practice the teachings and the wisdom of Jesus. They must teach you to pray and bring healing to the poor of this world, just as he brought God's healing to the society of his day and time.

Secondly, they would instruct you and share with you their own life in Jesus Christ. There would be much room for personal witnessing of their faith (i.e., their own sharing in the life of Jesus).

Thirdly, they would bring you to share in the work and the mission of Jesus Christ. You would be involved and committed to

making real the compassion of Jesus.

And then, only when they thought you were ready, would they seal your commitment with the waters of Baptism.

CHECK LIST: DO YOU HAVE A BAPTISM AWARENESS?

1. In my parish there is serious questioning about "doing' babies and calling that baptism. People sense that something is very much out of kilter among us. Yes/No
2. We want to wrestle with the full meaning of baptism, that is, our union with Christ in and through the Christian community? Yes/No
3. In my parish we are very aware that Baptism has definite consequences. It demands that we live out the mission of Jesus in daily life? Yes/No
4. On Sunday, when I look around I see that these people are the daughters and sons of God the Father, the sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ? Yes/No



DO RESURRECTION, NOT SPEAK ABOUT IT!

There was a wise teacher of grade nines who did not speak much about learning how to feel what other people are going through. When the weather was suitable she would take her class to the golf course. Now, on the first tee off, every student had to be blindfolded. This is what it is like to be blind. Of course, the fourteen year olds were very frustrated.

She gave everyone their allotted try and then she moved on to the second tee off. This time every student had to play golf out of a wheel chair. They had to try to hit the ball and then go after the ball from a wheel chair! This was even more frustrating.

She managed to get them to the third fairway but this time they had to have their right foot tied up and each student had to use a crutch. They did not get very far on this one!

She did not have to say very much about understanding other people who cannot function like the average seeing, walking and two footed fourteen year old. It was in the doing that they learnt much!

The Fifty Days of Easter is actually quite new to most mainline Christians. This is the

season that the people of the Church must apply the resurrection of Jesus to their own life and church.

It means living with the spirit that we have been joined to, that is the very spirit of Jesus Christ. Our second reading today (1 Jn. 2,2) tells us that his atoning sacrifice is not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world. Live that love and compassion that the very Son of God has for all the people of the world: those who are the peace makers and those who are waging war on other people. The resurrected Jesus calls us to a largeness of heart that makes us fearful. But if we live and walk with the resurrected Jesus, and his love for all peoples, we will experience our lives being opened to all peoples. His concerns will become our concerns.

Living in the resurrected Jesus means following the Gospel teachings and putting them into practice. This is the authentic sign that Jesus has risen within us.

Do the resurrection! Speak about it later!

WALK WITH THE TWO DISCIPLES ON THE WAY TO EMMAUS

Has there ever been such a wonderful experience of the risen Christ that has shaped our understanding of what it means to live and walk with the risen Jesus?

The two disciples were downcast. They had bet their future on the mission of Jesus and now it had come to a crashing end. They were devastated. When things go bad there is only one place to go: back home!

This stranger joins them along the road. They enter into conversation with him. He outlines how the Messiah (i.e., Jesus) was to suffer at the hands of evil men. They do not catch on.

Being very hospitable people they insist that he stay with them for the night. It is in the breaking of the bread that they discover that he is truly risen. He is among them.

The consequences of this event have shaped our Christianity.

Now, we experience the risen Jesus in the breaking of the bread (i.e., our Sunday Eucharist).

PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

Bring the Word of God to seep into your bones



He shares our bread and our fish

RESURRECTION SURPRISES

JESUS IS PRESENT IN THE EATING OF FOOD

The resurrected Jesus is so real. He eats a piece of broiled fish in their presence. He means to be present among us on a daily basis.

PRAY OVER THESE IMPORTANT WORDS FROM OUR SUNDAY READINGS.

KEY WORDS

Luke 24,36 Peace be with you



Luke 24,37

They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost.

Luke 24,39 Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.

Luke 24,40



He showed them his hands and his feet.

Luke 24,41

Have you anything here to eat?

Luke 24,42

They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

PRAY EASTER SUNDAY WITH WONDER

The stories of the resurrected Christ are very real. In today's Gospel selection Jesus comes among them and shows them his wounds (i.e., his hands and his feet). They can feel and touch the Risen Lord. The physical Jesus is truly the Jesus in glory. God's divinity is revealed and shared in very tangible ways.

When he eats the piece of broiled fish in their presence they must have been fully convinced about who he actually was.

All the stories of the risen Jesus indicate how we must understand him. This is not the Son of God

distant to our human reality. Rather, the resurrected Jesus is very much a living part of us. Jesus lives and moves among us. Our task is to be attentive to the presence of the resurrected Jesus in our own time and space.

Today, read the Gospel selection over slowly. Place yourself alongside the disciples as they see Jesus showing them his wounds. Be with the disciples as they share food with him.

This is not proof of the resurrection. This is the invitation to become part of the resurrection experience of Jesus.