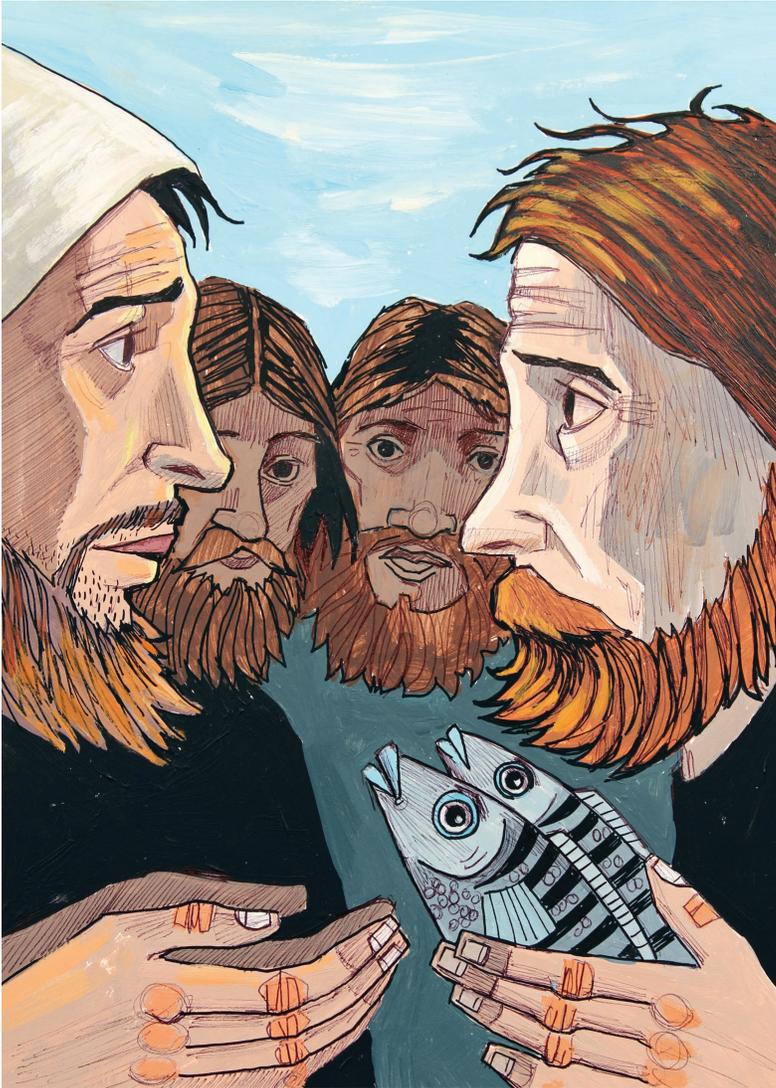


THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER



Prayer for Union with God

O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
your love for us is so immense
that you gave us your Son
to live and dine with us,
indeed, to be one with us.
Through your Son, we have come
to know you,
and to be united with you.
As we continue to share in the Eucharist
at the liturgy,
bring us into union with you.
Help us to be open to your Word
in the Scriptures
and to allow it to guide our lives
as we seek to be perfected in Christ.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, April 19, 2015

Presence of Christ

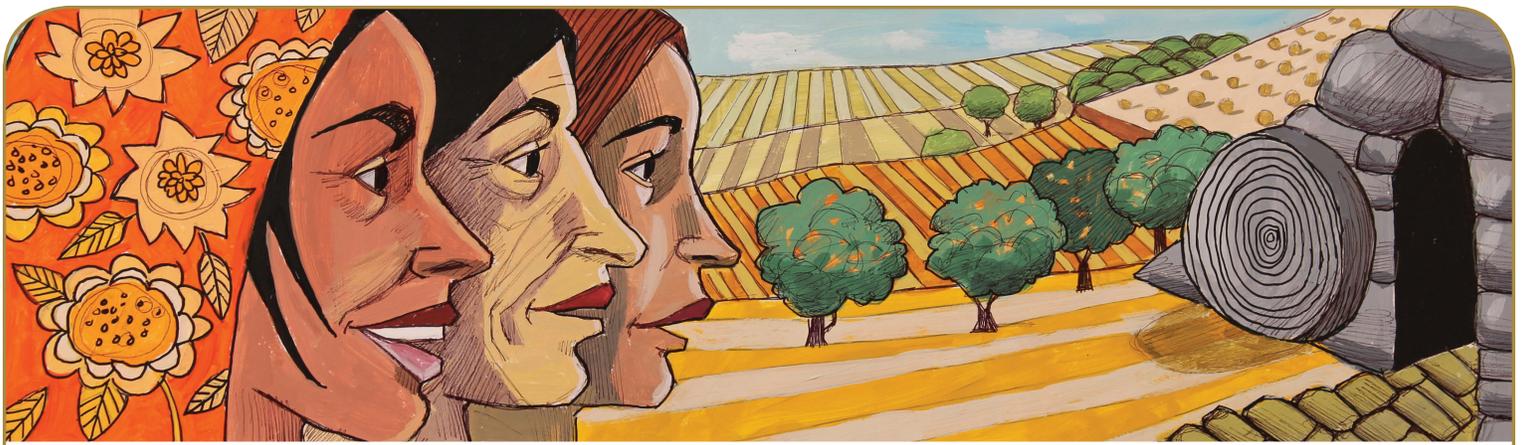


Today's Readings: Acts 3:13–15, 17–19; Psalm 4:2, 4, 7–8, 9 (7a); 1 John 2:1–5a; Luke 24:35–48. If you have ever committed a wrong for which you were terribly ashamed, today's First Reading may provide comfort. Peter seems to be chastising those who have gathered around him. And indeed, a large group has gathered in amazement, since Peter had just healed a lame man. After asking why the people stare in wonder, Peter confronts them about their role in Jesus' death. But he is not sending a guilt-ridden message; he wants the people to know of God's mercy. Even though they turned their backs on Jesus, God will forgive. God's mercy is open to us, no matter the wrong we have done.

Peter knows well how Christ not only awaits us to come into union with him but is searching us out. It is reasonable

to surmise that Peter would have been among the disciples to whom Jesus appeared, saying, "Peace be with you." Two disciples had just announced how they had recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread. Still, the disciples were startled to see Jesus. Without prompting, Jesus explains that he is the fulfillment of what has been written in the Scriptures.

Those in the room comprise the witnesses, but we are also witnesses. In the document "Disciples Called to Witness," the bishops of the United States state that "it is through common human experiences that the Word of God is revealed to us." Are you open to seeing God in the actions of the Holy Spirit in your life?



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 20, 2015

Called to Holiness

“All those who sat in the Sanhedrin looked intently at him and saw that his face was like the face of an angel.” This description of Stephen’s face found in today’s First Reading illustrates the holiness of the disciple. He who was “filled with grace and power” radiated the Spirit. All of us are to aspire to such an appearance. As *Lumen Gentium*, 39, states, all of us are called to be holy as Christ is holy. Acts 6:8–15; Psalm 119:23–24, 26–27, 29–30; John 6:22–29

Tuesday, April 21, 2015

The Bread of Life

The Jews questioning Jesus in today’s Gospel are looking for signs. As Jesus notes, they do not comprehend what God sent them in the past or the present. God, not Moses, sent the manna. Now God has sent Jesus, the Bread of Life. The Jews cling to the physical food God sent to the Israelites but do not recognize the key to eternal life before them. Do you express your gratitude for the gift that God brings you in the Eucharist? Today’s Readings: Acts 7:51–8:1a; Psalm 31:3cd–4, 6 and 7b and 8a, 17 and 21ab (6a); John 6:30–35.

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Accept and Believe

In today’s Gospel, Jesus notes that “anyone who comes to me I will never drive away.” Perhaps we may need to take these words to heart when we feel that we have distanced ourselves from God. No matter what we have done, no matter our status in life, God is there for us. We only need to accept and believe. Whenever you feel unworthy, you might want to look up this Gospel for reassurance. Today’s Readings: Acts 8:1b–8; Psalm 66:1–3a, 4–5, 6–7a (1); John 6:35–40.

Thursday, April 23, 2015

A Time to Rejoice

We might take to heart the example of the eunuch in today’s First Reading. Once he was baptized, “he continued on his way rejoicing.” Easter Time is a season of rejoicing, but we might have a hard time sustaining our joy. In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis states that “with Christ joy is constantly born anew” (1). Are there practices that you can embrace that would help you to stay rooted in joy? Today’s Readings: Acts 8:26–40; Psalm 66:8–9, 16–17, 20 (1); John 6:44–51.

Friday, April 24, 2015

Life in Christ

Today Jesus scandalized the Jews when he said, “unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you.” The sacrifice of bread and wine offered by the priest and king Melchizedek prefigured the offering made by Jesus, our high priest and king. Jesus points to the sacrifice of the Cross, where he sheds his blood for us—thus pouring himself out as the ransom for all—and atoning for our sins and the sins of the world. In what ways do we hunger for the Bread of Life? Today’s Readings: Acts 9:1–20; Psalm 117:1bc, 2; John 6:52–59.

Saturday, April 25, 2015

Feast of St. Mark

In today’s Gospel from Mark, the Lord tells the disciples to proclaim the Good News to all of creation and then ascends to heaven. Though he has ascended, Christ stays with his followers, working with them and performing signs. Do we think of Christ as always being with us, especially when we are telling others about him? Perhaps remembering Christ’s continued presence would reassure us enough to talk to others of his presence in our lives. Today’s Readings: 1 Peter 5:5b–14; Psalm 89:2–3, 6–7, 16–17 (2); Mark 16:15–20.

