

ST. THOMAS INDIAN MISSION

3rd Sunday of Easter
Year B
April 18, 2021

Fort Yuma, California | P. O. Box 1176, Winterhaven, CA 92283

Website: www.stthomasindianmission.org

Email: saintthomasindianmission@gmail.com

Tel: 760-572-0283

Fr. George "of the desert" Decasa
Pastor

Our Sunday Masses are now held inside the Church, on Saturdays at 4:30 PM and on Sundays at 8:30 AM.
Please come in a face mask and observe social distancing.

1st 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."

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm:

"Lord, let your face shine on us."

When I call, answer me, O my just God, you who relieve me when I am in distress; have pity on me, and hear my prayer!

R.

Know that the LORD does wonders for his faithful one; the LORD will hear me when

I call upon him.

R.

O Lord, let the light of your countenance shine upon us! You put gladness into my heart.

R.

As soon as I lie down, I fall peacefully asleep, for you alone, O Lord, bring security to my dwelling.

R.

2nd Reading: 1 John 2:1-5a

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.

The Word of the Lord.



LECTOR: Gospel

Acclamation:

ALL: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

LECTOR: Lord Jesus, open the Scriptures to us; make our hearts burn while you speak to us.

ALL: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

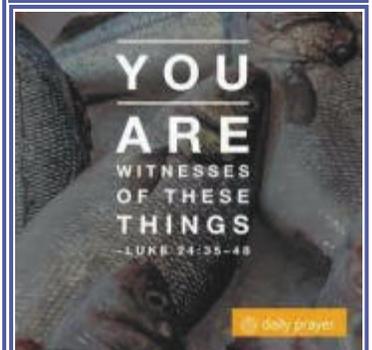
Gospel Reading: Luke 24:35-48

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 Gospel of the Lord.



The Mystery of Faith:

Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection, you have set us free.

REFLECTING ON THE WORD . . . GUIDEPOSTS

Today we hear again about the Resurrection of Jesus. Easter is too big a feast to celebrate just one day. We celebrate it for fifty days, corresponding to the fifty days after the Resurrection during which the Resurrected Lord would appear in a sporadic manner to the disciples; and then we continue to celebrate it every Sunday when we gather in faith to meet our Risen Lord in the Eucharist.

Our Gospel today takes us back to Easter Sunday. The opening line makes reference to the experience of two disciples with the Lord on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) in the afternoon of Easter Sunday.

The two disciples were walking away from Jerusalem, discouraged and depressed over Jesus' death. Jesus walked with them, talked to them about the Scriptures, and when he broke bread with them, they recognized him. The two disciples came running back to the upper room to tell the others. When they got there, they were told Jesus had appeared to Peter and while they were still speaking, suddenly Jesus appeared to all of them. That narrative is our Gospel today.

The four major points of the Emmaus story are found also in today's narrative about Jesus appearing to the eleven and commissioning them. Notice the following: 1) The failure of the disciples to recognize or believe Jesus; 2) The interpretation of the Scriptures by Jesus; 3) Eating with the disciples; 4) The opening of the disciples' eyes and minds.

In spite of the appearances in the early morning to the women, to the two disciples, and to Peter, Luke tells us the disciples were "terribly frightened." After Jesus showed them his hands and his feet, they were "incredulous for joy and were amazed." As already pointed out last week, this is to emphasize that the faith of the apostles was based not on what others said but on their personal witness of the Risen Lord with his hands, feet and side showing the marks of the wounds. In the same way, Paul's conversion was not the result of what others preached to him but of the appearance of the Risen Lord to him.

There are several kinds of evidence. Eyewitness testimony is from someone who sees the event in person. Circumstantial evidence is secondhand information. Hard evidence is something that is proof beyond the shadow of a doubt.

In today's Gospel, Jesus used his own body to give the disciples real evidence of his resurrection. He didn't want the story to be clouded by the possibility that the disciples were imagining things and that he was just a ghostly apparition. Jesus meant for them to know that it was truly him in the flesh. He showed them his wounds and went so far as to ask them for food, which he ate in their presence. He was the same Jesus who had been taken down dead from the cross.

Moreover, we may ask why are the wounds still visible on the transfigured body of Jesus? They are still visible on the transfigured body of Jesus because they are part of the resurrection which is a *triduum*. Thus, at the eucharistic celebration, the moment the bread and wine are consecrated to become in substance the Risen Lord, we acclaim: "Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life."

How will Jesus appear to us in this day and age? Will we be any better able to recognize him than those first disciples? Only if we allow our eyes and minds to be opened by the Lord.

Could it be that Jesus is showing us his wounded body in all the "wounded" in our society, particularly in those who have lost faith and hope and need to be rekindled by our Easter zeal?

We know the Lord, as did those first disciples, in the breaking of the bread. May this Eucharist spark in us a true recognition of the Lord, alive in our midst, and a renewed commitment to take his message out to all the world.

In the first half of the 1900s, Karl Barth -- a distinguished Protestant theologian, criticized both Catholic and Protestant liturgical practices. He said: "***The Roman Catholic Church has a sacramental service without preaching . . . we (Protestants) have a service with a sermon but without sacraments. Both types of service are impossible.***" Of course Barth's criticism would not be valid today because the Mass has been revised so that the Liturgy of the Word flows into the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Like the first disciples of the Lord, we recognize the Risen Lord at the breaking of the Bread (Mass) after which we are sent forth. Jesus sends us out together, not as individuals but as Church. We are sent not as the exercise of our unique skill, but as the expression of our faith that all we have to give comes from the Risen Lord who brought us together.

The Church is for all and for one. Individual sharing flows from the Eucharist. Barth was right: you cannot have one without the other.

Let us ask God for the grace of being able to share with individuals within the Church and with the whole parish family, both on the level of the Word and the Eucharist, both on the road and at the breaking of the bread.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

CELEBRANT:

In the breaking of the bread, Christ Jesus makes himself known to us as our life and resurrection. He sends us to be witnesses to his name. As we present to him our needs, *let our response be: Lord, protect your people.*

LECTOR:

- 1) Risen Lord, may your Church be ever thankful for the gifts of the earth and the gifts that flow from the Real Presence of Christ. *We pray:*
- 2) Risen Lord, may all leaders, by governing with fidelity those entrusted to their care, build nations in peace, brotherhood, and respect for human dignity. *We pray:*
- 3) Risen Lord, restore our hope and strength in the power of your resurrection. Deliver us from sin, fear, and anxiety as we face the trials of life. *We pray:*
- 4) Risen Lord, bless our labor that it may sustain our life on earth and enhance our human dignity. Ease our burden, make our faith strong, and inspire us to put our trust in you. *We pray:*
- 5) Risen Lord, bless our parish; bless our relatives and friends, give them constant encouragement, and guide them throughout their lives. *We pray:*
- 6) Risen Lord, bless all that we hold in the silence of our hearts, all our intentions spoken and unspoken. *We pray:*

CELEBRANT:

God our Father, you restored us to yourself through the resurrection of Christ your Son. Hear our prayers and strengthen us in giving witness to our Easter faith. We ask this through Christ our Risen Lord. Amen.

Our Bishop — Robert McElroy, invites us all to THE DIOCESAN CELEBRATION – A PENTECOST FOR ALL PEOPLE

The Celebration will be held at Good Shepherd Parish (8200 Gold Coast Drive, San Diego, CA 92126) on Saturday, May 22. The outdoor Mass begins at 11 am.

Bishop McElroy with Auxiliary Bishops John Dolan and Ramón Bejarano and clergy will concelebrate this annual Mass with the diverse communities and cultures of the diocese, invoking the Holy Spirit to renew us by building unity, justice and mercy in the Body of Christ.

Everyone is welcome to this extraordinary celebration of our universal Catholic family.

This year's beautiful Pentecost celebration begins the "re-set" of our diocese and parishes as we re-engage our communities as Covid-19 restrictions continue to ease.

A REMINDER RE CORONA VIRUS:

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person, typically through respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, or talking.

Airborne transmission is infection spread through exposure to those virus-containing respiratory droplets comprised of smaller droplets and particles that can remain suspended in the air over long distances (usually greater than 6 feet) and time (typically hours).

To protect yourself and others, please stay home for 14 days if you think you've been exposed to someone who has COVID-19. More importantly, be vaccinated. *Read on . . .*

An excerpt from Bishop McElroy's letter:

“. . . I write to you in hope as a pathway for emerging from the Covid pandemic is now clear for our nation. The love of God has accompanied us throughout this painful year of sickness, death and isolation, and now God has brought us vaccines that can heal us and heal our world.

It is vitally important that all of us receive the Covid vaccine. The Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson are safe and effective. They are fully approved for use at this moment by the teachings of our Church. And as Pope Francis has so clearly taught, receiving the vaccine is not only for ourselves as individuals. It is for everyone that we treasure, to keep them safe and healthy and bring back the joy of life to us all.

. . . . The sooner we are all vaccinated, the sooner we will be able to return to the many joys of our lives that we have missed during this past year of suffering. The vaccines, with our continued masking and social distancing during the coming months, will bring this hateful pandemic to an end.”



April 10-11 Sunday Collections:

\$ 1,434.00

Via Online: April 6 to April 13:

\$ 110.00

LAUGH A LITTLE:

It was Palm Sunday, but because of a sore throat, a little boy had to stay home from church with a sitter. When the family returned home, they were carrying palm branches. The boy asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by," his father told him. "Just my luck," the boy said. "The one Sunday I don't go and he shows up."

A little boy and his family were having Easter Sunday dinner at his grandmother's house. When the boy received his plate, he started eating straight away. His father told him to wait until they had said grace. "I don't need to," the child replied. "This is Grandma's house and she knows how to cook."

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