

Fr. Jins's Homily

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 3:13-15.Ps 4:2,4,7-9

1 Jn 2:1-5a. Lk 24:35-48.

The common theme of today's readings is a challenge to our Faith in the living presence of the risen Lord. That Faith should strengthen our Hope in His promises, call us to true repentance for our sins, and lead us to bear witness to Christ by our works of Charity. Does our Faith do that for us? The readings also remind us that the purpose of Jesus' death and Resurrection was to save us from our sins. Hence, they invite us to make our witness-bearing to the risen Lord more effective by repenting of our sins, renewing our lives, and meeting Jesus in the Word of God and at the Eucharistic Table. The first reading, taken from the Acts of the Apostles, describes how Peter fulfills the mission of preaching Jesus. In this second sermon, Peter continues the preaching mission begun on Pentecost in Jerusalem and again presents Jesus as the fulfillment of all the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Peter also asks the Jews to "repent" (think again) and turn toward God so that their sins may be wiped away. In the Responsorial Psalm (Ps 4) we declare our trust in God, asking, "Lord, let the Light of Your countenance", "shine upon us," and declaring, "You alone, O Lord, bring security to my dwelling" (vv 7, 9). In the second reading, John tells us that true knowledge and love of God consist in acknowledging that Jesus is the expiation for our sins. We make that acknowledgment daily by bearing witness to Him in our lives and by obeying His commandments. Today's Gospel leads us to reflect on Faith, doubts, and crises. It shows us how Jesus convinced his disciples of his Resurrection and then commissioned them to be his witnesses throughout the world. Jesus prepared them to receive God's power through the coming descent of the Holy Spirit upon them and commanded them to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins.

We need to relive the “Upper Room Experience” in the Holy Mass: The same Jesus who, in the Upper Room, prepared his disciples for their preaching and witnessing mission, is present with us in the Eucharistic celebration. He invites us to share in the “Liturgy of the Word” and in “The Liturgy of Eucharist.” In the first part of the Mass, Jesus speaks to us through the “Word of God.” In the second part, He becomes our spiritual food and drink. Thus, today’s Gospel scene is repeated every Sunday on our parish altars. Like the early disciples, we come together to repent of our sins, express our thanks for the blessings we have received, listen to God’s words, and offer ourselves to God on the altar along with our gifts of bread and wine. We also share in the spiritual food Jesus supplies, and we are sent to share his message with the entire world. Jesus needs us as witnesses to continue his mission. “Witnessing to Jesus” means testifying by our holy, loving lives that the power of the Risen Jesus has touched us and transformed us in the most remarkable way imaginable. Witnessing to Jesus also means letting Jesus speak through us to other people. Jesus needs Spirit-filled followers to be his eyes, ears, hands, and feet so that we may bear witness to his love, mercy, and forgiveness by exercising these gifts in our compassionate loving service to all our brothers and sisters. The Church desperately needs dedicated witnesses: priests, deacons, Brothers, Sisters, parents, teachers, doctors, nurses, the elderly, the young – all of us. The essence of bearing witness is to testify by our lives that the power of the risen Jesus has touched and transformed us. In other words, Jesus is to speak to other people through us. In Calcutta, a dying old woman with her head in the lap of St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa), looked at her for a long time, and, in a feeble voice, asked: “Are you the God Jesus who loves the poor and the sick?”

Our daily lives need to become the means of experiencing and sharing the risen Lord with others. Just as the disciples experienced their risen Lord in their community, let us learn to recognize the presence of Jesus in our own homes, social service centers, nursing facilities, workplaces, hospitals, and

schools. These are also the places where we have the opportunity to convey our peace and joy to others.

We need to become agents with Jesus in the establishing of the Kingdom in our world: Jesus wants us to be a community that shares and in which everything is shared; a community that knows how to recognize Jesus in the poor, the marginalized, and the sick; a community that brings healing into people's lives; and a community of peacemakers and not makers of division or conflict.