



Prayer

Lord Jesus, by Your cross and resurrection, You have set us free! May we celebrate Your rising from the dead with joy, knowing that we shall follow You through death into life! We ask this in Your Holy name. Amen.

Commentary

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9

**2nd Sunday
of
Easter**

In this First Letter of Peter to the early Christian community, the Apostle speaks of the great mercy of God and the living hope we have in Christ. Peter reminds us of the wonderful inheritance that is ours as children of God and the salvation that awaits us, thanks to Christ's glorious resurrection from the dead.

Commentary

1st Reading: Acts 2:42-47

Luke paints some very descriptive pictures of what the early Church looked like. Today's first reading is just one of them. It almost seems too good to be true; however, if we compare them to Paul's letters to the early communities he helps established, there is quite a contrast.

Luke is speaking about the Jewish communities that were the first followers of Jesus. They were raised from birth with a sense of family and tradition. Their heritage was everything to them. They knew what it meant to be Jewish especially in their relationship to God and to each other.

On the other hand, Paul wrote to the early communities of Rome, Corinth, Ephesus and so on. His letters contained praise, but mostly encouragement on how to act ethically and morally. He also instructed them on how to truly live as community.

At Easter, we just witnessed how our faith community increases in numbers through the new converts initiated into our Church. Thus, we continue the mission to bring new members to the Lord.

When we share our time, including helping those who are in need in our community—the lonely, the sick, the lost — we usually come away with a new sense of hope.

Just as in the days of the early Church, our lives as believers can be fraught with difficulties as our faith is tested, but we know these hard times will one day give way to eternity with Christ. Let us share our hope and joy with others as we recall Christ's triumph over sin and death and His invitation to walk with Him on the path toward Heaven.

Question

How do we maintain joy when we suffer life's trials?

Question

How do I participate in community?

How do I help the Lord to grow the Church?

How will you bring someone back to Church today?

Visit dphx.org/christ-in-our-neighborhood for free Scripture reflections for small groups. Then, invite a friend, family member or neighbor to join you and break open God's Word together!

Commentary

Gospel: John 20: 19-31

Notice the first gift Jesus gives after the resurrection, peace. This is not just a greeting, but also an actual gift. Peace is a state of tranquility or quietness of spirit that transcends circumstances. The term peace as Jesus uses it is a gift from God and congruent with His character. If God is peace, then to know God is to bask in His peace.

John makes the point, loud and clear, that Thomas was absent from the first encounter that convinced the disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead and was really alive.

Thomas wouldn't believe unless he had direct contact with Jesus himself.

John uses Thomas' doubt to make the point that everyone who receives the Gospel, by hearing, instead of seeing Jesus in person, is just as blessed with the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins, and the peace that only Jesus can give.

Question

Think of a time when you experienced Jesus' peace. How do you share the peace that was given to you?

This Week's Task

Think of people you know who seem anxious or worried and make a point of sharing the peace you have with them.

If you're the anxious or worried one, how can you receive Jesus' peace? (Hint: Forgiveness of sins.)



Group Prayer

Pray the following from St. Francis of Assisi:

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.*

*O divine Master, grant that I may not so
much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to
eternal life.*

Psalm

Response: Alleluia.

Let the house of Israel say,
"His mercy endures forever."
Let the house of Aaron say,
"His mercy endures forever."

Let those who fear the LORD say,
"His mercy endures forever."

Alleluia.

I was hard pressed and was falling,
but the LORD helped me.
My strength and my courage is the LORD,
and he has been my savior.
The joyful shout of victory
in the tents of the just:

Alleluia.

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the LORD has this been done;
it is wonderful in our eyes.
This is the day the LORD has made;
let us be glad and rejoice in it.

Alleluia.

Conclude with an Our Father