



# Christ in Our Neighborhood

## Prayer

God our Father, You raised Your Son from the dead and thus relieved our doubt in Your saving power. Help us to trust in You and in the Glory of heaven that awaits all who believe in You and in Your Son. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## Commentary

### 1st Reading: Acts 3:13-19

“Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His  
blood.”

This song was written in 1873 by Frances Crosby. Crosby was blind by birth and had every reason to doubt the power of God. However, her blindness would not keep her from proclaiming her trust in the Lord. She celebrated an assurance by faith in Jesus that she would be in heaven.

In today’s first reading, St. Peter proclaims the same “Blessed Assurance,” for all who believe in Christ crucified. His assurance came from seeing firsthand the resurrected Lord at Easter. Boldly, Peter proclaimed to his accusers:

“The author of life you put to death, but God raised him from the dead; of this we are witnesses.”

The fear that Peter had when Jesus was being carried off to be crucified was removed when he saw the risen Lord. He now had the “Blessed Assurance” that Jesus truly was the Messiah! He saw him and believed!

## Question

We do not have the same benefit of seeing the Risen Lord as the Apostles did after Jesus was raised from the dead. In what way are you “blessedly assured” of His presence and power in your life?

## Commentary

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

Our “Blessed Assurance” in our salvation should not be confused with the thought that I am saved simply by uttering the name of Jesus as Lord.

The First Letter of John reminds us of the following:

Those who say, “I know him,” but do not keep his commandments are liars, and the truth is not in them.

We might rightly acknowledge a “moral assurance” in our salvation through Christ if we are faithful to His commands.

Rather than simply saying, “I have faith in Jesus,” we must back up our faith with our actions. St. James asked, “What good is faith without practicing it?”

Our Church challenges us to have the fullness of faith in Jesus through the assent of our intellect (knowing that Jesus is Lord) and the assent of our will (deliberately following the Lord in whom we place our belief).

The assent of both our intellect and our free will is true faith. In Latin, such faith is called “Fides;” which means, “Fidelity.”

Fidelity is the kind of faith that the Lord requires of us. We can’t simply rest knowing that Jesus is the Savior. He commands us to carry our cross daily, feed the hungry and clothe the naked, forgive our enemies, etc. In other words, faith is not for spectators. It is meant to be lived out.

## Question

In what way do you live out true faith in Jesus?

## Commentary

### Gospel: Luke 24:35-48

These 50 days of Easter allow us to rediscover the excitement of the early Church as they celebrated the Risen Lord.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus not only appears before the disciples. He also shows them His pierced hands and feet. Finally, He eats bread in their midst.

This is not the behavior of a dead man. Yet, just a few days before, they saw their Lord hanging on a cross.

Imagine the disciples' amazement!

Before Jesus ascended to the heavens, He appeared to the disciples over the course of 40 days to support their faith and to grant them the "Blessed and Moral Assurance" that they would enjoy glorified bodies as well after their own death.

After witnessing these appearances, the disciples could not contain their excitement. The Good News was "preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

## Question

How has this Easter Season excited you? In what way are you sharing the Good News of the Risen Lord with others?

## This Week's Task

Consider ways to make your faith in the Lord come alive! Can you claim a life of fidelity to Christ? If not, what steps should you make this week to increase your faith in Jesus, your Risen Lord?

You may also want to consider sharing your faith through small acts of evangelization. Consider gathering new friends for Christ in Our Neighborhood and establishing another group. Visit [dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood](http://dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood) and see how easy it is to start a group of your own.

## Prayer

The leader invites the group to write down concerns or troubles they may be carrying. Each will place their written concern before a symbol of the Risen Lord (an Easter lily, for example). Together they will say (or sing):

"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long;  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.

Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Savior am happy and blest,  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love."

## Psalm

**Response: Alleluia.**

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. Alleluia.**

Know that the LORD does wonders for his faithful one;  
the LORD will hear me when I call upon him.

**R. Alleluia.**

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

**R. Alleluia.**

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

**R. Alleluia.**

**Conclude with an OUR FATHER**

You  
are  
witnesses  
of  
these  
things.