

3rd Sunday of Easter, Year B

GOSPEL

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The disciples told their story of what had happened on the road and how they recognised Jesus at the breaking of bread. They were still talking all about this when Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!'

In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts rising in your hearts? Look at my hands and feet; yes, it is I indeed. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.'

And as he said this he showed them his hands and feet. Their joy was so great that they could not believe it, and they stood dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes.

Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, has to be fulfilled.' He then opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and he said to them, 'So you see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.'

(Luke 24:35-48)

DID YOU KNOW?

Points of interest and Catholic lore

- The disciples referred to in this gospel are the two who had been fleeing from Jerusalem towards Emmaus when they encountered Jesus on the road. They returned to be witnesses of their encounter with the risen Christ.
- Luke also wrote the Acts of the Apostles. His gospel is the story of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem to the cross and resurrection. Acts is the story of the gospel spreading from Jerusalem to 'all the nations'. A unifying theme in Luke is that of 'journey'.

EXPLORING THE WORD

In the Gospel of Luke, all the events of Easter run into one another, and the whole of Chapter 24 should be read as a continuous narrative. Beginning with the discovery of the empty tomb, the resurrection narrative follows the disciples as they move away from what had happened in Jerusalem towards Emmaus, but they encounter the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread. In witnessing to this, Christ is present among them again until he finally returns to the Father.

Jesus goes to great lengths to reassure them that he is the same Jesus who was with them during his ministry. Something in his nature has changed, but he is still 'flesh and bone'. There is continuity with the Jesus they knew but now also something 'other-worldly' that they cannot quite comprehend. Jesus is the same but somehow transformed.

Jesus' journey is about to be completed with his return to the Father, but their journey is only just beginning. Now the disciples must journey from Jerusalem to all the nations, witnessing to what they have seen and heard, preaching the good news of repentance and the forgiveness of sin.

- Now that you are newly baptised, can you identify with the notion of just setting out on a journey of witnessing to the Good News?
- Where do you think your journey will lead you?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Opportunities for group discussion and personal prayer

- 'He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.' Reflect on your journey towards Jesus through the Scriptures.
- How do you plan to continue that journey of deepening faith through the Scriptures?
- 'Their joy was so great they could not believe it.' How are you feeling now about what has happened to you in these last weeks?
- Exchange memories of times of great joy or revelation in your life. Have you ever experienced a wave of relief and delight after a period of tension or sorrow?
- 'You are witnesses to all this.' How will you witness to Christ in your life this week?
- Today's psalm response could be repeated this week.

Lord, let your face shine on us.

