



Lectio Divina. Third Sunday of Easter. Year B

Aman (Jordan), Sr. Nancy Jaimes, April 18, 2021.- The joy of living with the Risen Lord.

PRAYER

Lord, You who are Light, send a ray of your divine light to my poor soul, so that I may see you and understand you. Give me deep faith, so that all your words may become light that enlighten me, draw me to you and help me follow you in the paths of justice and truth.

Oh Christ! O Word! My Lord and my only Master! Speak because I wish to listen to your words and put it into practice. I wish to listen to your Divine Word; I know that it comes from heaven. I desire to listen to it, meditate on it and practice it because in your Word is life, joy, peace and happiness. *(Prayer of Blessed Antonio Chevrier)*

GOSPEL

Now I invite you to take the Bible and read carefully the passage that the liturgy of this Sunday presents to us. It is important to have an atmosphere of silence and serenity that will enable us to interiorize and savor this beautiful biblical passage

Lk 24: 35-48. Jesus appears to His disciples

Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the 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 Messiah 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.”

QUESTIONS THAT WILL HELP YOU TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE PASSAGE

- What is the subject of the conversation of the apostles and those who accompany them?
- What is the greeting that Jesus, the Risen Lord addresses them?
- What is the reaction of the apostles and those who accompany them?
- What does Jesus say about their reaction?
- What signs does the Risen Lord perform to make Himself known to this group of people?
- What instructions does the Risen Lord give to the apostles?

INTERIORIZATION OF THE PASSAGE

This biblical passage reveals on the one hand, their difficulty to believe in the resurrection of Jesus and on the other hand, the mission that the community receives to give witness to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

The Evangelist Luke gives great importance to the community that was assembled and that would start communicating with the Risen Jesus. He insists on the community aspect. The communities to which his Gospel was addressed, were formed mainly by the pagans who were influenced by the Greek culture. They, among other things, disregarded matter; in this case the body. Because of their understanding of Greek dualism, they had difficulty to accept the resurrection of Jesus

Jesus appears in their midst and greets them,” *“Peace be with you;”* this greeting reminds us of the announcement made by the angels at the time of the birth of the Messiah, *“Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to people of good will;”* also the canticle of Zachariah makes reference to peace, *“...to guide our steps in the way of peace.”*

The disciples are frightened and filled with fear; then some almost believe to have seen a ghost. It is very evident here the perplexity of the disciples and at the same time, it encourages the communities to perceive that without the resurrection of Jesus, even the project of the Kingdom of God inaugurated by Him, would have a dead end. This is why the Evangelist insists on the resurrection of the body as a concrete, real and tangible act. In the text it is evident that the disciples are invited to look, to touch, to verify and Jesus shows them his hands, his feet and even eats a piece of roasted fish with them.

In the text, the Evangelist narrates that the disciples still could not yet believe because they were so joyful and astonished. This could even surprise us, but at the same time, it alerts us on the fact that faith in the risen Jesus cannot remain as something superficial and momentary (joy, surprise, emotion), but it must be a matter of a lasting commitment that leads to true witness.

We know very well that the resurrection of Jesus is the central idea of the whole Bible and the plan of God, *“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.”* Jesus is the great interpreter of the Bible and from Him the Bible acquires meaning and unity.

This beautiful biblical passage ends with a surprising affirmation of Jesus, ***“You are witnesses of these things.”*** For the Evangelist Luke the aspect of the witness of the disciples is very important; because from there will come the proclamation of the Risen Lord, to the ends of the earth. The witness and universality of salvation are the task and work of those who believe in the risen Jesus. *“...that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”* (v. 47) In this way, His followers will offer continuity to the new Project of the Kingdom inaugurated by Jesus and will proclaim that the unjust society did not succeed in annulling the process of life and freedom that He brought about.

THE WORD OF GOD ENLIGHTENS THE REALITY OF YOUR LIFE

The time has come to relish and nourish the Word of God; it is the opportunity to present before Him the reality of your life, just as it is, without pretending to hide anything. Allow the Word of God to shed light on this reality. For this purpose, we suggest these guidelines that can help you. Go through them with interest, depth, joy and dedication; thus, you may obtain very good results.

Take a few minutes to think about the community to which you belong (family, religious community, companions at work, neighbors etc.):

- Do you dialogue in your community? What are the topics of your dialogue?

- Do you pray together?
- Do peace and joy reign among you?
- Are you certain that the Risen Lord dwells in your midst?

Remember that the passage of this Sunday presents us with the Risen Jesus who appears for the first time to the community of disciples assembled together and His presence profoundly transforms their lives. Today He is present in the community to which you belong.

It is not easy to believe in the Risen Jesus, neither is it easy to be certain of His living and efficacious presence in the community to which we belong. It is something that can only be understood through faith which Jesus Himself awakens in us. We must know that faith in the Risen Lord is not born automatically and definitely in us. It is being awakened in our heart in a humble and fragile way. At the beginning, it is just a desire and it usually grows surrounded by doubts and questions.

Pope Francis, reflecting on this passage, suggests some elements which will certainly help us for our personal and community meditation. He says: Then the Lord himself appears in the room and says to them: “Peace be with you”. Many feelings erupt in the hearts of the disciples: fear, surprise, doubt and, finally, joy. A joy so great that they “could not believe it”. They are shocked, stunned, and Jesus, almost with a faint smile, asks them for something to eat and starts explaining the Scriptures, opening their minds so they are able to understand them. This is the moment of astonishment, of the encounter with Jesus Christ, where so much joy doesn’t seem real; even more, to feel joy and happiness in that moment seems risky and we feel tempted to take shelter in skepticism, in “not exaggerating”. It is easier to believe in a ghost than in the living Christ! It is easier to go to a magician who predicts the future, a fortune-teller than to have faith and hope in a victorious Christ, in a Christ who triumphed over death! (*Homily of Holy Father Francis, April 24, 2014*)

To have an encounter with the Risen Lord is an experience that cannot be mistaken. The one who has experienced Jesus fully alive, feels the need to describe it to others. What one experiences is contagious. One does not remain dumb. One is converted to be a witness. The disciples of Emmaus were describing what had happened to them on the way and how they recognized Him in the breaking of the bread. Mary Magdalene went running to where the disciples were and told them, “I have seen the Lord” and thus like them, there are many more, whom the encounter with the Risen Lord changed to be witnesses. Today all of us are called to be witnesses of the Risen Lord.

PRAYER

**Jesus, Risen Lord, who gave peace to the disciples gathered in prayer,
saying to them, “Peace be with you,” grant us the gift of peace.**

**Defend us from evil and all forms of violence which shake our society,
so that we may have a human, dignified and fraternal life.**

**Oh Jesus, you who died and rose again by love, keep away from our
family and society every form of hopelessness and discouragement so
that we may live like risen persons and be carriers of your peace:**

Amen! (taken from “Aleteia”)