

## Commentary on the Readings for April 23, 2023

### The Third Sunday of Easter

The theme of the readings for today is an interesting departure from the celebration of the Resurrection as we have had in the past few weeks. In these readings, Peter, in both the First and the Second readings, appears to have come to understand the whole message of Jesus. He realizes that Jesus did not just appear on the streets of Galilee or Jerusalem suddenly without giving advance knowledge and preparation. This was done by the prophets and patriarchs who spoke of Jesus centuries before. (See Deuteronomy 18:15)

In the **First Reading**, from the *Acts of the Apostles (2:14- 33)*, Peter goes deep into the Old Testament scriptures to learn that David spoke of Jesus through the Psalms. He quotes from Psalm 16. Peter then goes on to say that even the great King David died and was buried to be seen no more. Other great men and women of the Old Testament also have come and gone, but Jesus who died was then honored by the Father by being raised from the dead to live forever. This should give us cause to reflect on how we are fulfilling our role in God's Plan as Jesus did.

In the **Responsorial Psalm, (16:1- 11)**, the psalmist sings of the great spiritual comfort that comes from being close to Jesus and walking in His footprints. This is something that we should take very seriously because we never know when our time will come.

The **Second Reading** is from the *First Letter of St. Peter (1:17- 21)*. In this great pastoral letter, Peter advises us to walk with the Lord Jesus daily because Jesus paid a great price for our being delivered from sin. Therefore, we should not take His sacrifice lightly. Here also, as he did in "*Acts*" above, Peter refers back to ancient scripture to acknowledge that Jesus existed before all creation — "*before the foundation of the world.*"

The **Gospel Reading** is from the *Gospel of Luke (24:13- 35)*. In this passage we have the beautiful story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus where they meet Jesus but do not recognize Him. This is understandable because Jesus has been resurrected and is now in His divine "Glory." These disciples must have always seen Jesus in the "here and now" without looking back at how scripture described His coming. The "stranger" then goes through the Old Testament scriptures to point out how they often referred to the Messiah; but it was in the "breaking of the bread," the Eucharist, that they finally recognized Him.

Do we have to have someone continually pointing out to us how to recognize Jesus? Have you given sufficient time to reading the scriptures to find out for yourself how the prophets and patriarchs and others foretold of Jesus' coming and His mission? Don't let this Easter Season pass without doing some research on your own to learn of the Messiah's coming and His role in God's Plan of Salvation. Something to think about during your prayer time this week! **MFB**