

Commentary on the Readings for April 14, 2024

The Third Sunday of Easter

The Readings for today continue to reflect on the events of the Resurrection. The theme is "*knowing*" and "*believing*." To "*know*" Jesus Christ is more than knowing about Him in an historical sense. As used in these readings for today, to know Him is to *experience* Him in a profound way as the two disciples did on the road to Emmaus in the story that immediately precedes today's gospel or last week's gospel?? However, we do not need to have an apparition to know Jesus in a personal way. All that is necessary is to sincerely *want* to know Him, and He will take care of the rest. Let's see how this works in today's readings.

The **First Reading** is from the ***Acts of the Apostles (3:13-19)***. In this passage, Peter is telling the crowd on the first Pentecost that it was their sin and ignorance that crucified Jesus. These were probably some of the same people that shouted "Crucify Him" a few weeks earlier, but he goes on to say even now, God will forgive them if they "repent and be converted." We cannot claim ignorance of such an important point of our faith and salvation. This is the central event of our faith. We must do what we can to better understand its meaning and purpose.

The **Responsorial Psalm (4:2-9)** is a prayer that might be said by the souls in Purgatory or by someone who is reflecting on his own life near its end. We might do well to see what this wise penitent has to say, for he speaks as one who has known the Lord.

The **Second Reading** is from the ***First letter of John (1 John 2:1-5a)***. Here, John the Evangelist is advising us to avoid sin; but because of our human weakness, if we do sin, we have Jesus Christ who is waiting to return us to the Father. However, we must "know" Him in order to partake of the benefits He offers through His death and resurrection. John tells us how we might do that. So listen up! We all need this advice.

The **Gospel Reading** is from ***John (24:35-48)***. Place yourself in this scene. It is a few nights after the Resurrection and Jesus appears in the upper room where the apostles celebrated the Passover meal, and are now huddled there out of fear. Two of their members come rushing in from the country with a wild story about Jesus walking with them and stopping for the night with them and how they came to know it was Jesus in "*the breaking of the bread*." Jesus then admonishes them for not understanding or believing; but He is patient and opens their minds to understand.

We have the advantage of 2000 years of history and countless interpretations of the scriptures to tell us what all this means; but still there are many who do not understand how the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ affects them. So, during this holy season, we might ask ourselves "what can I do to better understand the sacrifice and suffering that Christ endured on my behalf?" We could begin by re-reading the four gospel accounts in private while asking the Holy Spirit to enlighten our heart and mind to their meaning. Something to think about during your prayer time this week!

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