

Church of the Divine Love

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

PROANAPHORA, RITE II

Opening Hymn #460 – Alleluia! Sing to Jesus! vs1-3

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria page 356

Collect of the Day – lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Acts 3:12-19**

Psalm 4

Second Lesson: **1 John 3:1-7**

Gradual Hymn #208 – The strife is o'er

Gospel: **Luke 24:36b-48**

The Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Welcome and Announcements

Offertory Hymn #657 – Love divine

Nicene Creed page 358

The Confession page 360

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Collects page 100

Prayer for Strength and Confidence page 459

For the Aged - #49 page 830

For Young Persons - #47 page 829

Prayer of St. Francis - #62 page 833

The General Thanksgiving page 101

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom & Dismissal page 102

Dismissal Hymn #492 – Sing, ye faithful

Sermon Sunday April 18, 2021

Acts 3: 12-19, Psalm 4; 1 John 3: 1-7; Luke 24: 36b-48.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

It's not enough that the tomb is empty. It's not enough to proclaim, "Christ is risen!" It's not enough to believe in the resurrection. At some point we have to move from the event of the resurrection to experiencing the resurrection. Experiencing resurrected life begins with recognizing the risen Christ among us. That is the gift of Easter and it is also the difficulty and challenge described in today's gospel.

Cleopas and his companion are telling the other disciples how Jesus appeared to them on the road to Emmaus when Jesus, again, shows up out of nowhere, interrupting their conversation. "Peace be with you," he says. They see him, they hear his voice, but they do not recognize him. They "thought that they were seeing a ghost." They know Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried. They know dead men do not come back to life. This can only be a ghost, a spirit without a body. The tomb is open, but their minds are closed. They are unable to recognize the holiness that stands among them. They are continuing to live, think, and understand in the usual human categories. They have separated spirit and matter, divinity and humanity, heaven, and earth. Whenever we make that separation, we close our minds, we deny ourselves the resurrected life for which Christ died, and we lose our sense of and ability to recognize holiness in the world, in one another, and in ourselves.

With Jesus' resurrection, however, God shatters human categories of who God is, where God's life and energy are to be found, and how God works in this world. Resurrected life can never be comprehended, contained, or controlled by human thought or understanding. Jesus' resurrection compels us to step outside our usual human understandings of reality and enter the divine reality. That new reality begins with touching and seeing, flesh and bones, hands and feet, and broiled fish. Jesus said to his disciples, "Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." Then "he showed them his hands and his feet." After this he ate a piece of broiled fish in their presence. Flesh and bones, hands and feet, and broiled fish are the things of creation, the natural order. Mary, a woman created by God, gave Jesus his flesh and bones and his hands and feet. She also gave him the stomach that would eat the fish God created. The very same flesh and bones, the very same hands, and feet, appeared to Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus and then vanished from their sight, and now show up unannounced and unexpected during their conversation with others. In last week's gospel Jesus' hands and feet, his flesh, and bones, passed through walls and locked doors.

The resurrected life of Christ, it seems, is revealed in and through the created order. It is not, however, bound by the created order. Rather, the resurrected body and life of Christ unite the visible and invisible, matter and spirit, humanity, and divinity. On the one hand Jesus has a real body. On the other hand, it is not subject to the natural laws of time and space. It's not one or the other. It's both. It is a new and different reality. The degree to which we have allowed ourselves to be bound by the created order is the degree to which we are unable to see resurrected life and holiness in this world. We bind ourselves through our fears, our sorrows and losses, our runaway thoughts and distractions, our attachments and addictions to things, people, and even beliefs. Sometimes it's our unwillingness to

allow or trust God to grow and change us. In binding ourselves to the created order we lose recognition of and the ability to live in the sacred. That's the very opposite of resurrected life.

The resurrected life of Christ reveals that all creation and every one of us are filled with God, holiness, divinity. Nothing can bind or supersede the grace that is given us through resurrection: unconditional love, unconditional forgiveness, unconditional life. That is, I think, one of the most difficult things for us to see, believe, and live into. It is, however, the divine reality into which we are invited, not at some future time and place but here and now. Christ our God longs and desires to open our minds to understand the scriptures, to understand all that has been written, spoken, and revealed about him in whatever form that happens and has happened. That's what Jesus did for the disciples and it's what he does for us. This is not an academic or intellectual understanding. That the disciples are witnesses does not mean they now have all the answers. It means they now have the life Jesus wants to give them. They are witnesses based not on what they know, but on who they are, how they live, and their relationship with the risen Christ.

I don't know how this happens. I can't give you a set of instructions or a to-do list. That would be like giving you a set of instructions on how to fall in love. The resurrected life is not acquired it is received. It happens when we risk unbinding ourselves from the usual ways of seeing, living, and relating. This is not a rejection of the natural order. It is allowing the natural order to open to and reveal something more. That's what happened for the disciples with Jesus' hands and feet, with his flesh and bones, and the broiled fish. They saw and recognized something about Jesus and in so doing they saw and recognized something about themselves, holiness. It happens for us too.

Think about a time in your life when you lost track of time. I don't mean you forgot what time it was, but that you were so awake, so present, that you entered a new world. Think about a time when life seemed more real than it ever had and you touched or tasted life in a way never. Recall a moment when your heart opened, softened, and you knew you were somehow different. Remember that day when you sensed something new was being offered you; possibilities that you did not create for yourself. They just opened. Reflect on that moment when you realized that you were ok and could again start to live. Those are the moments when Christ opens our minds to understand. They are moments of awe and wonder that leave us in sacred silence. They fill our eyes with tears. We weep, not from sorrow or pain, but the water of new life. They are the moments in which we say, I never want this to end. I don't want to leave this place. In each of those moments the one who is fully alive and risen, the Christ, is calling us to see and recognize him, to join him, and to discover our new life. This is the authentic self we long to become, the self that we already are, and the self we are becoming. This is resurrected life.

Let's not lose this moment. Let's not put this text behind us. It is much too easy to come here each Sunday, listen to the gospel, hear, for better or worse, whatever I have to say, and then return to life as usual. Don't let that happen. Your life is too important to let that happen. Carry this text with you over the next week. Let it open your eyes, your heart, and your mind to the life Christ is offering you. Let it be the voice of Christ opening your mind to understand. Sit with it. Pray with it. Wrestle with it. Trust it. As soon as you catch a glimpse of the risen Christ and your own resurrection.

"You are witnesses of these things," he says to us. Tell it. Live it. Become it. The resurrected life is yours. You are witnesses. **Let us pray:** Eternal God, give us grace to accept the gift of life you have made possible for us in Jesus Christ, and give us courage to share the Good News with others, for his name's sake. **Amen.**

Bishop's Directive – When attending services we are all required to wear a mask, use hand sanitizer, sign in with name and phone number for tracing purposes, and only sit in pews with decals.

3 EASTER

10:15 AM PROANAPHORA, RITE II
(also on zoom)

MONDAY

8:00 AM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY

7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY

10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

8:00 PM AA MEETING

SATURDAY

10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

4 EASTER

10:15 AM PROANAPHORA, RITE II
(also on zoom)

11:15 AM VESTRY MEETING
(also on zoom)

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

Prayer for Grace and Favor in the New Year:

Dear God, we ask that you provide for our needs, we ask for your grace and favor. We pray for your blessings to cover us; we pray that you would help us to prosper and make every plan that you have birthed in our heart to succeed.

We pray that others would take notice of your goodness and could not help but say, "these are the ones that the Lord has blessed." Shine your light in us, through us. May we make a difference in this world, for your glory and purposes.

Set your way before us. May all your plans succeed. We may reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing. In Jesus Name, Amen.

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Barbara Curran

Dina Palkowski

Frances & Donna Mongelli

Nathan Treadwell

Tyler Gorman

Chris Dickson

Michael Echevarria

Andy

Michael & Family

Martinisi Family

Lois Kessler

Kathleen

Irene

Girard Bishop

Margaret

Bernie Walther

Jerry & Family

Kim

Rachael

Warren

Bill Conklin

Anthony Paribello

Edward Lent

Kate Jones

Del

Arlene Goodenough

Children who are ill:

Franklin Tenesaca

Aidan

Christopher and his family

Ciara Berbeck

Gabriel

