

26 APRIL 2020
THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

OPENING HYMN

Come into His Presence with thanksgiving in your hearts
And give Him praise, and give Him praise
Come into His presence with thanksgiving in your hearts
Your voices raise, your voices raise
Give glory and honour and power unto Him
Jesus the name above all names

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)

OPENING PRAYER

May your people exult for ever, O God, in renewed youthfulness of spirit, so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption, we may look forward in confident hope to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING: Acts 2:14,22-33

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 15(16):1-2,5,7-11

Response: Show us, Lord, the path of life.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.
I say to the Lord: "You are my God."
O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize." (R.)

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel,
who even at night directs my heart.
I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm. (R.)

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad;
even my body shall rest in safety.
For you will not leave my soul among the dead,
nor let your beloved know decay. (R.)

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right hand happiness for ever. (R.)

SECOND READING: 1 Pet 1:17-21

GOSPEL: Luke 24:13-35

REFLECTION:

The first reading is taken from the *Acts of the Apostles* and concerns bearing witness to the "name" of Jesus, and the implications which this witnessing necessarily brings with it. Peter and the apostles answered their inquisitors by stating firmly their faith in Christ, and the lesson ends with reference to their joy at having been found worthy to endure trials for the name of Christ.

The second reading is from the *first Letter of Peter*. St. Peter says that we are sons of God because of his infinite mercy in sending Christ to us as our brother. So we can rightly call God our "Father." But we must behave as true, loyal sons, during our "time of exile" on this earth, for our merciful Father is also the absolutely just God who will judge each one of us "impartially according to our deeds" when we lay down our earthly life.

In our Gospel today from *Luke*, why was it difficult for the disciples on the road to Emmaus, to recognize the risen Lord? Jesus' death scattered his disciples and shattered their hopes and dreams. They had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. They saw the cross as defeat and could not comprehend the empty tomb until the Lord Jesus appeared to them and gave them understanding.

So, at the end of the passage, we read, 'they set out that instant' (Lk 24:33). The two disciples in our Gospel today started to understand that death is not the last word on the life of each one of us as we cannot be 'held in its power' (Acts 2:24). This is a sign of great hope that gives us irreprehensible joy! In so much as we journey to Jerusalem — each on his own road, it must often seem long and tiring. However, now with our eyes fully opened it appears that we have the privilege to say to all the world, 'the Lord has indeed risen' (Lk 24:34).

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Let us now spend some time in prayer asking God to listen to our needs.

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer*

We pray for our Church: that all may be able to set hearts on fire by their joyful witness to the good news of the Resurrection. Lord, hear us.

We pray for all people in our parishes who are not able to meet together at this time: that they may draw hope from the mystery of the Resurrection. Lord, hear us.

We pray for people in our world who are suffering in any way at this time, especially those affected by the Corona Virus: may they feel the comfort and peace that Jesus brings in their hearts. Lord, hear us.

We pray for all people who have died recently and especially for people we know and love: may they share in the fullness of joy with Jesus forever. Lord, hear us.

Closing prayer: God of the Resurrection, we believe in your love – your love created the world. We believe in your love – your love sent Jesus to live with us on earth. We believe in your love – your love sent the Holy Spirit to breathe life through us. Amen.

Let us together by the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, dare to say:
(All say the Lord's Prayer together) Our Father, ...

CLOSING PRAYER

Look with kindness upon your people, O Lord, and grant, we pray, that those you were pleased to renew by eternal mysteries may attain in their flesh the incorruptible glory of the resurrection. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

We see Christ with eyes of the heart,

With our hands we touch the Word of life.

What we see and hear we declare

That together the life of Father and Son we may share.

For our Saviour has conquered, alleluia, he has conquered,

Over death victorious, alleluia, victorious,

Over evil he'll triumph, alleluia, he'll triumph,

Jesus Reigns over all!

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)