

The Third Sunday of Easter
April 15, 2018
Preached by the Rev. Lisa M. Erdeljon
St Michael's Episcopal Church, Barrington, IL
Luke 24:36b-48

How would you react to meeting Jesus?

Today's Gospel Reading: (Luke 24:36-48)

- Similar to last week's (last week = John; this week = Luke's version of appearance to Disciples)
- Comes after appearance on Road to Emmaus (in Luke's Gospel)
- Summary/Re-telling
 - Disciples gathered
 - Jesus appears
 - Disciples are scared and confused
 - Jesus proves his corporeal reality (he invites the disciples to look and touch; while he also eats)
 - Jesus connects all Scripture to this moment
 - Commission of the Disciples
 - "You are witnesses of these things."
- ... In Luke's Gospel, the next thing that happens is that Jesus ascends to heaven
- We're not there yet, though! (cut from today's story)

Focus on Disciples:

- First, "startled and terrified"—"thought they were seeing a ghost"
 - See, touch, eat—believe
 - Opening of their minds to fully understand (wouldn't that be nice)
 - Commanded to go and share "the Good News"
 - Good News = repentance and forgiveness of sins

Shows how Disciples move from fear and doubt to worship

- Through understanding that Jesus is the same: "the One raised is also the One crucified"
 - Not just fear and doubt but confusion and loss of self, purpose, identity, mission...
 - Worship = knowing, experiencing, witnessing the Resurrection

Jesus sees these emotions

- The same we would probably experience
- The same we probably experience every day, all the time

Therefore: "Peace be with you" = comfort from Jesus

- To the Disciples
- To us
- To the Church
- To the world

But this **peace** is not quite like *pax* or world peace or the absence of conflict

- It is the type of peace that each of us has inside, in our hearts and souls
 - A peace that cannot be sought out
 - A peace that is given to us when life's purpose is given to us
 - Jesus's crucifixion took that purpose away
 - But Jesus's resurrection returns that purpose
- "Peace be with you" = a call to have purpose again
 - A gift of purpose

Disciples are called/commissioned/commanded:

- "Repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in His name to all nations"
- "You are witnesses of these things."

Disciples now have purpose and meaning and identity

- Identity = witnesses of Scripture being fulfilled

Witnesses of Gospel, Truth, Scripture

Because of Disciples

- We know the Gospel is not fiction
- We know Jesus Christ is both man and divine
- We know Jesus Christ is both visible and invisible
 - Matter and spirit
 - A real body and also not subject to laws of time and space

Because of Disciples, we have the greatest story ever told:

- A story that we know and witness as truth

**But not just those disciples, two thousand years ago!
All of us! We are all disciples!**

Because of all of us, the world knows about the greatest story

- The best news
 - The overcoming of Death into Life
 - Of sin into Salvation
 - Of Jesus Christ

*"The most convincing proof of the Resurrection
is the daily testimony of the faithful that the Christ still lives
and the work of His kingdom continues."*

It is up to us!

- We must continue the witness,
- The telling of the story,
- The living a Christian life!

...

Today's Opening Collect, we prayed:

- "That we may behold Him in all His redeeming work"

- We are part of that redeeming work
- We are proof of that redeeming work
- We are performers of that redeeming work

How would you react to meeting Jesus?

- Emotions: Doubt? Fear?

And what peace is given to you?

- Purpose in life: Love, serve, witness, teach...

Think of your role in the Gospel Story, in the Resurrection Story, in the Good News Story...

- Where do you fit in with the disciples two thousand years ago?
- Where do you fit in today?

And again, to all of you—all of us:

- May you find that purpose
- May you be transformed from doubt and fear to worshiping
- May you proclaim “repentance and forgiveness of sins” to all nations
- May you live into your Christian commission
- May you be a witness, in all you do, of the Good News of Jesus Christ
- And, may “Peace be with you”

Amen.