

# Commentary on Sunday Scripture – Year B

## Third Sunday of Easter

### **First reading:**

(Acts 3.13-15, 17-19)

*Peter's Speech to the Jews*

This reading is the final section of Peter's speech to the people of Jerusalem after Pentecost, when he is explaining to the crowds the significance of the first miracle worked by the apostles in the power of the Spirit. Like all the speeches in Acts, it is not a word-for-word, tape-recorded report, but is a sample of Peter's preaching to the Jews.

He lays the blame for Jesus' rejection squarely on them, but shows that it was just as scripture had foretold. All the speeches end with an invitation to repent. This does not mean simply to get all weepy about past sins, 'how dreadful and wicked I have been'. It means that the listeners, and we, must change our ways, adopt God's and the Risen Christ's system of values. To convert means: I was going in one direction; now I turn round and go in another. Then the way I look at the world becomes different. I see things from a different angle, God's and Christ's angle.

This sort of conversion does not so much look at the past with regret as look at the future with confidence. It is the new determination that allows God to wipe out our sins.

### **Question:**

*What difference does Christ's Resurrection make to my life?*

### **Second reading:**

(1 John 2.1-5)

*Our Advocate with the Father*

This second reading advances one step further than the first. The first is about conversion, the second about blotting out former failures.

Jesus Christ is our Advocate with the Father, 'standing at the right hand of the Father', because he takes our sins away. How does he do this? By his act of obedience on the Cross Jesus wipes out the disobedience of Adam, that is, of all humanity. Adam (which means 'man') is the figure of all humanity, and Adam's sin is the symbol of all human sin, a sort of 'prequel' of all sin, an act of turning away from God, of independence and disobedience. On the Cross Jesus was perfectly united to the Father, in an act of utter obedience in love, to which the Father in love responds, with a renewal of love for all humanity.

For us, too, it is true that if we know God, if we have any appreciation of God and any personal bond to God, we cannot but obey him. God's commands are not arbitrary, but are the way of keeping close to God. By the command of love God reveals himself and invites us to be like him.

### **Question:**

*In what sense is the world renewed by the Resurrection?*

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**Gospel**

*(Luke 24.35-48)*

## ***Fish for Supper***

The two disciples had met Jesus on their way to Emmaus. There Jesus had used the Eucharistic meal to reveal himself to them, for the Eucharist is always an occasion for us to get to know the Risen Christ better. Now he meets the whole group of disciples in their refuge, the Upper Room.

It is perhaps the same incident as the one we heard last Sunday, but this time there are different emphases. Now the stress is on the meeting with a real person, not just a ghost. That is why he eats a piece of fish. The important lesson of this is that, in our Resurrection to true life, it is the whole person that is raised, not just the soul.

Christian teaching is that a person is an animated body. We work out our salvation with fingers and toes and other bodily members, and all will be raised to life. It is not just a matter of thoughts and intentions! The whole body is baptized into Christ and is the instrument of our salvation. The body will be changed, and St Paul tells us that it is stupid to ask what sort of body we will have in the Resurrection, but I will be raised as a whole person.

### Question:

*Will we have bodies in heaven?*

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