

Read

Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41

Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6,
11-12a, 13b

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19 or 21:1-14

LIVING THE WORD

Third Sunday of Easter

May 1, 2022



REFLECTION

Jesus asks Simon Peter if he loves him. And he asks us the same question. Hopefully by now, you know Jesus loves you. Today Jesus wants to know: do you love him? As with Simon Peter, an affirmative “Yes, I love you” only goes so far. Jesus calls for action: feed and tend to my flock; show me you love me by what you do for the least and the littlest.

This three-fold questioning harks back to Peter’s three-time denial of Jesus. He said he would never do such a thing, but his actions proved otherwise. Jesus is not interested in lofty talk. He knows the work of discipleship demands actual action.

Love is a verb. We embody love by the ways we live our lives in this world. “Do you love me?” Jesus asks. He will know the answer by watching: do I treat my classmates with respect? Do I feed the hungry and visit the sick? Do I forgive the friend who’s hurt me? Do I pick up the trash littering the sidewalk? We answer yes to these most important questions by the ways we live our lives. We answer yes by walking our talk.

ACTION

Answer yes to Jesus’ big question this week by putting love into action. Start close to home. Who are the people in your family who reflect Christ’s love to you? How can you be especially kind to them this week? Perhaps that means inviting your little sibling to hang out with you, visiting a grandparent, or doing the dishes without being asked.

**“Prayer in action is love,
love in action is service.”**

—Mother Teresa



QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today’s readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ Consider Jesus’ question to Simon Peter for you yourself: Do you love me?
- ❖ How can you embody love in the world?



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THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

LECTIONARY #48C

Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41

Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12a, 13b

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19 or 21:1-14

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

After the crucifixion, the empty tomb, and Jesus appearing in the locked room, the disciples weren't sure what to do next. Some returned to their previous work—fishing. When Jesus appeared on the shore, and the apostles recognized him, Simon Peter leapt into the sea to swim to the Lord to greet him. Like Simon Peter, we are called to greet the Lord with terrific enthusiasm and joy. We greet the Lord this way when we encounter him in the Eucharist, in the poor, and in our own families and communities. We can recognize Jesus by his love and by his abundance.

Q FOCUS: *We respond with joy to Christ's presence.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week the Church remembers St. Athanasius on May 2, who was a bishop in the fourth century. Athanasius fought against the popular heresies of his time, even when the heretical beliefs were more popular and common than orthodoxy. He made great contributions to the Council of Nicaea (AD 325), which made clear statements describing the teachings of the Church on the identity and nature of Jesus. The Nicene Creed, which we still recite in Mass, was created based on the teaching of that council. Athanasius is considered a doctor of the Church.

Church Teaching Connection

Scripture specifically tells us that Jesus' resurrection was a real, physical event. The witnesses did not see a spiritual rendering of Jesus, nor did Jesus' ghost wander the earth. His decomposed body did not move about, either. Jesus was resurrected, and his body was glorified; he rose bodily, changed, from the grave. He was not confined to the physics of typical humanness; as we see when he appeared in a locked room. The resurrection transformed Christ's humanity, but it was still possible for Jesus to interact with the disciples and lead them to a deeper faith (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 643-646).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

John 21:1-14

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

At that time, Jesus revealed himself again to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed himself in this way. Together were Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We also will come with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was

Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?" They answered him, "No." So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something." So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish. So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad, and jumped into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, for they were not far from shore, only about a hundred yards, dragging the net with the fish. When they climbed out on shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught." So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come, have breakfast." And none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they realized it was the Lord. Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them, and in like manner the fish. This was now the third time Jesus was revealed to his disciples after being raised from the dead.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

When Jesus died, those who followed him at first returned to what was familiar: fishing. The men sailed their vessel on the sea of Tiberias (which was also called the sea of Galilee), doing the job they did before Jesus called them to follow him. The motion of the boat, and the tasks of casting nets and pulling oars must have felt comforting and familiar to these men who had been grieving Jesus' death. Can you imagine how the apostles felt, and what they were thinking? They knew Jesus had died, and they saw

him again after his death—they knew he was alive, but Jesus wasn't with them at all times, we read.

► **When you are sad, confused, or upset, what tasks or habits bring comfort to you? Why?**

Then we hear that Jesus appears to them, unexpectedly, while they were doing their work. At first, they don't recognize him, but they obey his command even though they have been fishing all night without catching anything. Once one of the disciples realized who it was, Simon Peter became so excited to see the Lord that he swam from the boat to shore to greet the Jesus! Can you imagine their joy and excitement in seeing the Lord again? When they saw Jesus this time, it was the third time he had appeared to his apostles. Like Simon Peter, we too can greet Jesus with such enthusiasm.

► **When has God come to you unexpectedly in your daily activities? How do you recognize him and how did you respond to feeling his presence in that moment?**

The Gospel is unclear about how it was that the disciple was able to recognize Jesus.

The reading doesn't mention that it was the sound of Jesus' voice, or his appearance. We don't know how they knew it was the Lord, but when you consider the story, consider the familiar aspects of Jesus that are embedded in it—Jesus gives instructions, and richness comes from following his way. Jesus gives to the apostles abundantly and freely. There was joy.

► **How does the presence of Christ in your daily activities transform your outlook on the day? What are some ways that you can more easily recognize Christ in those you encounter?**

The resurrection was not only a spiritual event. Jesus was not a ghost wandering around Jerusalem and the sea of Tiberias. Jesus was glorified in the resurrection—his body didn't look exactly as it looked during his earthly life, though we read in Scripture that he bore the scars of his crucifixion. Jesus' glorified body was a real physical form from his real, physical body. Understanding that the resurrection was a real event that transformed Jesus helps us to realize our own futures. Like Jesus, we will someday be resurrected from the dead. Like Jesus, death will not hold us,

and death has no power over us. We may wait longer for that glorious day, but that day will come. In the meantime, we can allow view of others and the way we live to be transformed when we encounter Christ.

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 176.

We are called to recognize the Lord and to greet him with joy.

Jesus gives freely and abundantly, and we are called to be like him.

Jesus was bodily resurrected from the dead.

Act on the Word

Greeting God with Love and Enthusiasm

For this activity, you may want to prepare the group questions below ahead of time so that each group can access them (write them on the board, print them out, etc.). You will also need to provide paper and pens.

How do we greet the Lord like Simon Peter? Most people do not have the opportunity to take a flying leap off a boat in order to swim enthusiastically to the Lord. Instead, we find other ways to greet Christ with great love, joy, and passion. God is present to us in many ways, and it is important to take time to recognize his presence.

Divide the teens into three groups. If you have a large group of young people, make several groups so that each group has enough people for a discussion, but not so many people that group members can't freely communicate. Assign each group as follows: God, the poor, family/community.

Give each group their questions, and explain that we will be discussing how we can greet each group with the enthusiasm that Simon Peter showed Jesus when he leapt into the sea of Tiberias in order to greet Jesus.

In the "God" group, give the young people some conversation starters such as, how do we meet God in Scripture? How to we greet him in prayer, at Mass, and when we encounter him in the Eucharist? How does God change and form us in all these places and encounters?

In the "poor" group, give the teens some conversation starters such as, how do we encounter God in the poor and suffering? How do we encounter him when we see the "least" of society? How do we treat them as people made in God's image and likeness? What does such an encounter look like, and what does it feel like to each party? How can we be Jesus' hands and feet in such situations?

In the "family/community" group, give the young people some conversation starters such as, how do we encounter the people in our families and communities in a way that honors God, and honors them as people made in God's own image? How can we show our love and appreciation to God for the people in our families and our communities? Specifically, how can teens honor these relationships as they navigate growing into adulthood?

Conclude by having the groups share their reflections.

Closing Prayer

*Gentle shepherd and guide,
inspire us to true service
with loving hearts and minds
focusing on the ever increasing needs
of your kingdom.*

*May we be open to your Son
and his vision and witness of
faithful discipleship.*

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.lwgr.org. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.