

### Third Sunday of Easter

The stranger approached the pastor after service and said, "I'd like you to pray for my hearing."

The pastor placed his hands on the man's ears and said a passionate, earnest prayer.

"How's your hearing now?" the pastor asked.

Looking surprised, the man said, "Well, it's not until tomorrow."

Dear Friends,

We are in the Easter season. Easter is not a one-day event, we need more witnessing. We live out our life to be a good witness. The readings today bring us witnessing of the apostles to the community.

In the first reading, Peter brings the awareness and witnessing to the people gathered in front of the church. In his speech, he became a witness to what had happened to Jesus in Jerusalem and Jesus' resurrection. He delivered that speech after curing a crippled man in the temple area. Peter continues to insist to them that out of their ignorance, they killed Jesus. It is a time of repentance and witness for Jesus' resurrection.

In the second reading, John talks about keeping up his commandments, if you know him. Keeping his word and living out is the great witnessing. Whatever we want to witness needs to be shown in action. That will be perfect witnessing. I read one of the quotes from the book, "Do something beautiful for God" "we have to love until it hurts. It is not enough to say, I love. We must put that love into living action. And how do we that? By giving until it hurts. True love causes pain. Jesus, in order to give us the proof of his love, died on the cross. A mother, in order to give birth to her baby, has to suffer. If you really love one another, you will not be able to avoid making sacrifices."

In the gospel, Jesus appeared to them in the upper room, it was a continuation of his witnessing to his apostles. They were all frightened to see Jesus in different times. Jesus witnessed them physically by eating with them that he is alive. That is the life changing event for the apostles. Resurrection is a life changing event to all of us. It demands a living action from us. This story was told and retold and recorded by Luke for at least three reasons: (1) Jesus' death and Resurrection fit God's purpose as revealed in Scripture; (2) the risen Jesus is present in the breaking of bread; and (3) the risen Jesus is also physically absent from the disciples.

The reality of Christ's Resurrection: By inviting his apostles to look closely at him and touch him, Jesus removed any fear that they were seeing a ghost. He instilled confidence in

them that he loved them by greeting them: "Peace be with you." By eating a piece of broiled fish before their eyes, he convinced them that they were not dreaming or having a mere vision or hallucination. Jesus wanted them to be authentic witnesses to the reality of his life as their risen Lord with his glorified soul and body. Jesus explained that his death on the cross had not been the result of a failed plan. Instead, it was part of God's eternal plan to show His love for His people by subjecting His Son to a willing, sacrificial, suffering and death.

Witnessing to Jesus is testifying by our lives that the power of the Risen Jesus has touched us and transformed us in the most remarkable way imaginable. Witnessing to Jesus is letting Jesus speak through us to other people. Jesus needs Spirit-filled followers to be his eyes, ears, hands and feet so that we may bear witness to his love, mercy and forgiveness by exercising these gifts in our compassionate loving service of all our brothers and sisters. The Church desperately needs dedicated witnesses: priests, deacons, Brothers, Sisters, parents, teachers, doctors, and nurses – all of us. the church needs witnessing disciples. Are we one of them?