



Third Sunday after Easter

Sermon by Revd Allie Josseph



Sunday 18 April 2021

READINGS

Acts 3: 12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3: 1-7; Luke 24: 36-48

Meeting the Resurrected Lord

This Sunday we celebrate the third Sunday of Easter. We read from the Gospel of Luke about Jesus encountering his disciples after He rose from the dead. Jesus comes into the place where the disciples were, just after the two disciples returned from Emmaus to tell the other disciples how they met Jesus while they were walking out of the city and how they recognised him in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus entered the room they were in, stood amongst them and breathed upon them. We hear these words in the book of Genesis, when God breathed life into Adam whom God created from the dust of the earth. Jesus brings new life into his disciples. There are various themes found in the post resurrection encounters between Jesus and his disciples. He appears to them and they either do not recognise him or are afraid of him, then he explained to them who he was and then they eat together, this time they offered him some broiled fish, when they eat together he opens their minds to understand the scriptures.

Jesus encounters us too, especially when we are together in holy communion, and He explains to us the scriptures, making us see him and transforming us into His witnesses. I invite you to open yourself to the experience of the apostles sitting around behind closed doors filled with all kinds of emotions ranging from fear to shame and apprehension. They were afraid of the Jewish leadership, the people who killed Jesus, but there were also other things going on. Judas killed himself and they had to deal with the unanswered questions that suicide brings. They were probably sitting around seeking comfort with the only people who truly knew what they were going through. Huddled together with their companions waiting for all that happened since Good Friday to make sense for them.

All of them fled the scene, except for John, the rest of the disciples watched the proceedings of Good Friday from a safe distance. Peter denied Jesus three times before he

heard the cock crew and hanged his head in shame. They were all affected by the death of Jesus, each in their own way and now they are hearing reports that Jesus is alive. Like all things this is also a multi layered event. The death and resurrection also have different meanings for different people. We all deal with crisis differently.

Imagine when they saw Jesus standing amongst them, what must have gone through the minds and hearts of the disciples. Emotions ranging in all directions. From the great joy of having the master back from the dead to the sad and sorry depths of shame, feeling the betrayal in the pit of their tummies. The two who left in disappointment to Emmaus, were still reeling from recognising Jesus in the breaking of the bread sees him again and again they were caught up in the moment of seeing the resurrected Jesus.

Then Jesus asks the question: Why are you troubled, why are you questioning what you see?

To those who deserted him in his darkest hour he invites to touch the marks that the nails and the lance made in his hands and feet and in his side. He tells his disciples to touch him and transcend their own brokenness, he invites them to believe in the one who defied death and is alive, eating bread and fish. Jesus invites us to look beyond our brokenness and the things that we are ashamed of or anxious over, he tells us that he has paid the price for our salvation He showed us that he too has wounds, wounds that bring death, but despite it all he is alive, and he wants us to be his witnesses. He wants us not only to understand the scriptures but to live them in our daily lives. To be there for each other in our brokenness. To carry one another even in our darkest hour.

What do we take away from all of this? What is the message we are going to spread as we witness to the risen Lord?

Jesus defied the laws of nature, he died and rose again, he is truly the Alpha and the Omega. Jesus knows our every weakness and despite it all he dies for us in hope that we will look beyond the shame and the guilt, the betrayals, and the sin. To see one another as he sees us. From the disciples we learn how to seek comfort in our fellow brothers and sisters, we as the Christian Church should be a place where the broken and the sinner find fellowship, understanding and compassion when they are in need.