

Seeing Jesus Without Seeing Jesus
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This is the Second Sunday OF Easter. We number the Sundays during the 50 days of Easter as being of Easter, not “after Easter”

Today is what is known as “low Sunday”, partially due to much smaller attendance compared to last Sunday. But originally when you celebrated all of Easter week you come to the 8th day, today, which is somewhat lower in importance than last Sunday.

It’s really too bad because our lessons today are packed with significance!

Looking at our readings today, the Acts reading is downright shocking “Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possession , but everything they owned was held in common. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the Apostles feet and it was distributed to each as any had need.”

What we have in our Gospel today are some significant things which occurred in the days after the resurrection.

Despite the number of times Jesus tells the disciples to “Fear not” or “Be not Afraid “ the disciples are in locked room, both times Jesus appears, frightened. They didn’t really understand what Mary Magdalene meant about having seen Jesus alive. Notice they are in a locked room, both times! They have locked themselves in and locked out the world into which they are to go and preach and heal.

When Jesus enters the room he speaks directly to their fear. Peace be with you. Now let’s pay attention to Jesus words to Thomas the second time Jesus comes into that locked room.

Jesus says “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

Who is Jesus talking about? He’s talking about us We are called to believe without seeing.

We are called to be Easter People! Part of a new community. Our Epistle and Psalm talk about living in peace and unity. Figuring out what it means to be an Easter people is the task of these 50 days of Easter.

Part of that involves moving from hiding in fear to courageous witness. We are to accept the gift of peace offered by the empowering breath of the Holy Spirit. We are to accept the commissioning of the disciples with the power to forgive and we are to be forgiving.

We are called to come out from behind the locked doors of convention and the world’s conventional expectations and to move out to spread the word to those who have not seen and do NOT believe.

Last Sunday as I looked out at the congregation I saw the light of joy in the eyes of those who believe, without having seen the actual events or watched them replayed on CNN. And folks, we are the people who must carry the message of this great joy to those who need it!!

Mother Teresa, when looking for The Holy, never looked up, she looked into the eyes of those around her. What might she see if she looked into our eyes.

The truth for us and for all who came before us, is that we HAVE seen reflections God's love which we proclaimed and celebrated at Easter. We have seen those who live by the truth of all that we read of Jesus' life and word.

With Mother Teresa's eyes look at the people around us who are giving unselfishly of what they have for the furtherance of God's kingdom. Look at the face of a teacher, a nurse, a mental health worker, a pastor, volunteers who do what they do for something other than material reward.

Look into the faces of these people and others around you for it is there that you may SEE and come to believe.

We who have not literally touched the wounds of our savior are called to touch the wounds of his creatures, those who hurt, those who mourn, those who have no voice, and those whom society has discarded, or ignored. And wouldn't it be wonderful if someone saw just a glimpse of the Holy, looking in our eyes.

I read in my online d365 meditation this week, something that may help us to be Easter People:

Find your voice today and speak Peace to someone in distress.

Find your grip today and hug someone who needs to know they are loved

Find your stride today and move toward a hurting world with the healing power of the one who made you, who redeemed you, and who has called you to serve.