

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

LECTIONARY #47

READING I Acts of the Apostles 3:13-15, 17-19

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter said to the people:

“The God of Abraham,
the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,
the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus,
whom you handed over and denied in Pilate’s presence
when he had decided to release him.
You denied the Holy and Righteous One
and asked that a murderer be released to you.
The author of life you put to death,
but God raised him from the dead, of this we are witnesses.
Now I know, brothers,
that you acted out of ignorance, just as your leaders did,
but God has thus brought to fulfillment
what he had announced beforehand
through the mouth of all the prophets,
that his Christ would suffer.
Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be
wiped away.”

Emphasize “God” the first time and subdue when repeated. The new information will stand out.

Don’t proclaim too harshly; it is not intended to be anti-Semite. Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s promises and offers forgiveness to all who turn to him.
Pause after “witnesses.”

Jesus’ death and resurrection have salvific consequences and fulfill God’s plan from the beginning—let your tone match this Good News.

READING I

More than other New Testament writers, Luke used speeches to convey early Christianity’s *kygma* (the salvific message of Christ). Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, this powerful message was communicated by Peter, Stephen, and Paul who, through their speeches, interpreted the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection and showed how these events fulfilled God’s salvific plan. Today’s first reading forms part of Peter’s third speech, in which he addresses his fellow Jews who marvel over the healing of a lame man, and who presume that

Peter and John have done this by their own power. In response, Peter clarifies that the one at work is none other than the God of their ancestors. Peter then emphasizes his central message: Jesus, whom they and their leaders had handed over and had sentenced to death is, in fact, “the Holy and Righteous One,” “the author of life,” and the one whom God raised up and glorified. Strikingly, Peter notes that their action came from their ignorance. This fact justifies the current offer of salvation to them (compare this with Jesus’ words on the cross in Luke 23:34). To emphasize the enormity of this message, the offer, and events are the fulfillment of what God had proclaimed through the prophets.
The speech indicates that Jesus’ prophetic power is now found in the words and deeds of the apostles. Addressed to the Jewish people of the era, the call to “be converted” offers the promise of being cleansed of their sins, but also the warning that their fate rests in responding to the apostles’ prophetic words. It is, of course, as timely a call now as it was then.

For meditation and context:

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9 (7a)

R. Lord, let your face shine on us.

or

R. Alleluia.

When I call, answer me, O my just God,
 you who relieve me when I am in distress;
 have pity on me, and hear my prayer!
 Know that the LORD does wonders for his
 faithful one;
 the LORD will hear me when I call
 upon him.
 O LORD, let the light of your countenance
 shine upon us!
 You put gladness into my heart.
 As soon as I lie down, I fall peacefully asleep,
 for you alone, O LORD,
 bring security to my dwelling.

READING II 1 John 2:1-5a

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

My children, I am writing this to you
 so that you may not commit sin.
 But if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father,
 Jesus Christ the righteous one.
 He is **expiation** for our sins,
 and not for our sins only but for those of the whole world.
 The way we may be sure that we know him
 is to keep his **commandments**.
 Those who say, "I know him," but do not keep
 his commandments
 are liars, and the truth is not in them.
 But whoever keeps his word,
 the love of God is truly perfected in him.

GOSPEL Luke 24:35-48

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

The two disciples recounted what had taken place on the way,
 and how Jesus was made known to them
 in the breaking of bread.

expiation = ehk-spee-AY-shuhn =
 making amends
 A comforting reading; redemption is
 available to the whole world.

"Knowing" is not just about information,
 but also about a relationship and action.

Use a steady, even tone to set the context of
 the story. As you prepare, read Luke 24:13-
 35 to remind yourself of the Emmaus story.

READING II

1 John was the first and
 most important of three
 letters written by the Elder to his Johannine
 community to warn them about a group of
 unorthodox (professing incorrect beliefs)
 secessionists who question that Jesus is
 both human and divine, and whose ideas
 about keeping the commandments and liv-
 ing love are inadequate.

Their advocate if they do, in fact, sin. Not only
 is he their advocate, but he is also the
 "expiation" for their sins and those of the
 whole world. It should be noted that refer-
 ring to Jesus as the advocate, a term we
 often think of as applying only to the Spirit,
 is not unusual in the Johannine tradition.
 The second half of the reading empha-
 sizes the idea that we come to know God
 by following his commandments. References
 to "him" and "his" in this part of the reading
 are referring to God, and not to Jesus, who
 was the subject of the first half of the read-
 ing. Ultimately, the Elder stresses (in con-

GOSPEL

Understandably, the Gospels
 of the first weeks of Easter
 time focus on the appearances of the res-
 urrected Lord to his disciples. When it
 comes to such appearances, however,
 the four Gospels reflect two different tra-
 ditions: Matthew and Mark point to his
 appearance to the disciples in Galilee; Luke
 is the perfection of love.

trast to the ideas of the secessionists) that
 there is an unbreakable bond between
 the knowing God and keeping the command-
 ments, indeed, to keep the commandments
 is the perfection of love.

While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."
 But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have."
 And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them.

He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And he said to them,

"Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

existence from his former presence. This is resurrection, not resuscitation!
 Even more important in Luke's account is how Jesus serves as the model of Luke, describes and justifies the mission of Luke, describes and justifies the mission of the disciples, will undertake in Luke's second volume, the Acts of the Apostles. S.L.

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Use a gentle tone for Jesus' dialogue. He doesn't want to scare them.

Still reassuring them, he invites the disciples to confirm for themselves his corporal nature.

Jesus teaches them about himself to help them understand. They (and we) are not left alone to figure everything out by themselves.

Deliver looking at the assembly. We are now the witnesses of "these things."

and John focus on appearances in Jerusalem. Today's Gospel is Luke's version of Jesus' appearance to the disciples in Jerusalem. When the two disciples who encountered Jesus on their way to Emmaus return to Jerusalem to share the Good News with the other disciples, Jesus appears in their midst. In spite of his greeting of peace, they experience mixed emotions: terror, fright, doubt, and disbelief, but also joy and amazement. Elements such as touching his wounds and eating fish may appear to emphasize the physical, but Luke is carefully differentiating Jesus' new mode of