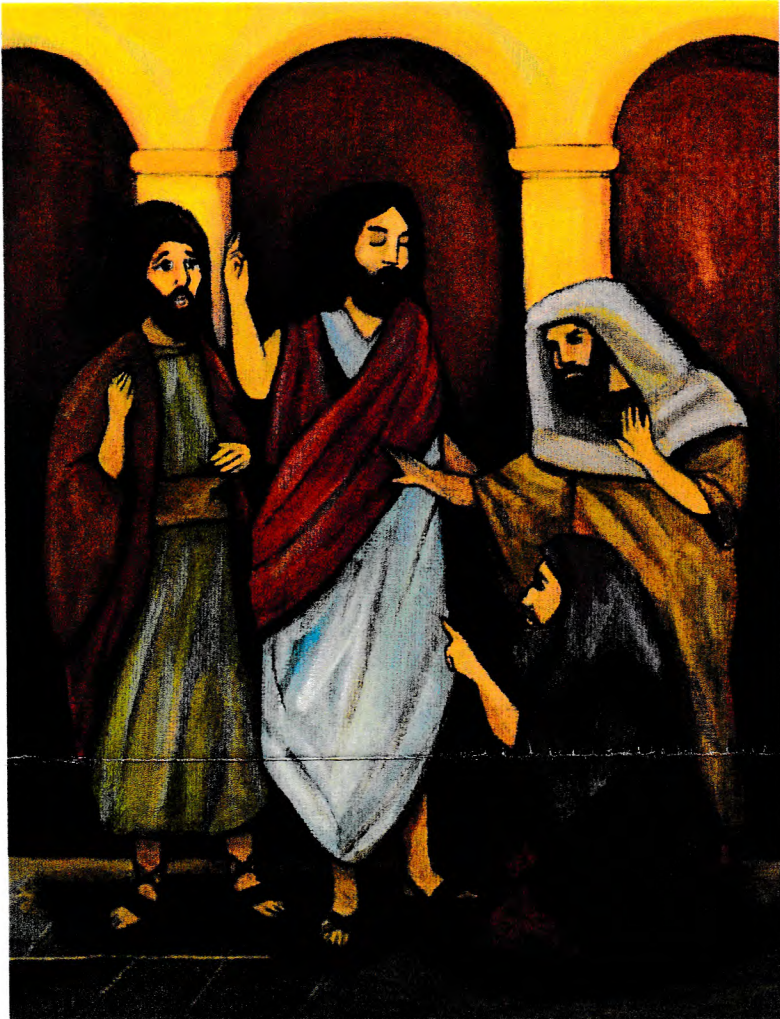


# THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER



## Glory

God of our fathers,  
by raising Jesus from the dead,  
you have glorified your Son and author  
of life.

We offer you thanks and praise  
for your countenance shining upon us  
with this great gift of love.

Like the Apostles in the Upper Room,  
give us your peace as we stand in  
amazement of your glory.

With hearts transformed,  
urge us to go forth preaching Jesus'  
Holy Name

and bear witness to his healing love  
and peace.

Bind up our wounds  
so that, bearing the marks of the cross,  
we may be found strong in faith,  
persevering in hope, and filled with the  
fire of your love.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 15, 2018

## Witnesses



*Today's Readings: Acts 3:13–15, 17–19; Psalm 4:2, 4, 7–8, 9; 1 John 2:1–5a; Luke 24:35–48.* The last line of today's Gospel states, "You are witnesses of these things." This statement is an invitation to reflect on all that Christ has revealed to us. His passion, death, and Resurrection are at the core of our witness because in Baptism, we were immersed into the Paschal Mystery of Christ.

After the Resurrection, Jesus encounters the disciples and tries to help them understand and unpack their lived experience before his death, what his death means, and the new life promised in the Resurrection. The events that unfolded in Jerusalem over the past few days have dramatically affected their lives and the lives of all believers.

We, too, are witnesses to these things. Think about all the times your encounters with Christ transformed your heart. Often we don't notice these encounters at the time, but upon reflection our hearts burn with the zeal and presence of Christ. Because we have seen and heard the Good News, we cannot be silent. Our life in Christ demands that we work for justice and facilitate peace. The love of Christ compels us to reach out to the poor and marginalized to hear their stories and work to meet their needs.

The verse that precedes the Gospel, asks Jesus to "make our hearts burn" as he speaks to us in Scripture. How might you listen to the Word this week?



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, April 16 Stephen Faces Trial

The account about Stephen's trial is similar to the trial Jesus faced when accused of blasphemy. Some falsely witnessed against him. The Spirit was with Stephen as he debated with those who were against him. The early Christians, along with their message of Jesus, were not always welcomed. Even today, Christians and other religious groups face persecution. Let us pray for those who face trial and hardship because of their faith. *Today's Readings: Acts 6:8-15; Psalm 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30; John 6:22-29.*

### Tuesday, April 17 Martyr

The First Reading provides an account of Stephen, the Church's first martyr. Place yourself at the scene and try to imagine what it must have been like to hear Stephen preach. Would you have received his message or covered your ears? Stephen witnessed God's abundant love in his care for the community, even though they struggled to hear the Good News. Nourished by the Bread of Life, the Church continues to go forth sharing the Gospel. Is there a modern-day martyr you could read about? *Today's Readings: Acts 7:51-8:1a; Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6 and 7 and 8a, 17 and 21ab; John 6:30-35.*

### Wednesday, April 18 Sing with Joy

Today's Psalm captures the spirit of the Easter season. All of creation sings with joy to God for all his marvelous deeds. With the busyness of our lives, it may be hard to remain focused on Easter. If we believe that Christ has saved us from sin and death, then how can we not rejoice and raise our voices in praise? For your prayer at mealtime today, sing your favorite hymn of praise. *Today's Readings: Acts 8:1b-8; Psalm 66:1-3a, 4-5, 6-7a; John 6:35-40.*

### Thursday, April 19 Catechesis

The account of Philip and the eunuch is a story of conversion. The eunuch is reading from Scripture, but is unaware of the meaning the story holds. Philip, moved by the Spirit, goes to him and begins to teach him about the Christ who gave his life for the life of the world. Filled with faith, the man asks for Baptism. Each of us is called to teach the faith. Today, pray for catechists, teachers, and those in the Christian initiation process. *Today's Readings: Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 66:8-9, 16-17, 20; John 6:44-51.*

### Friday, April 20 Conversion of Paul

The story of Paul's conversion is beautiful. One striking image is that of the scales falling from his eyes. Our Lenten journey has allowed us to contemplate the sin that blinds us to faith. During Easter, are there still "scales" that need to fall from our eyes so that we might see and believe? Might we be called to assist others on their faith journey, just as Ananias assisted Paul? Paul's encounter with Christ changed him so much that he heeded the call to go to all nations proclaiming the Gospel. In prayer, close your eyes and put yourself in Paul's place and visualize his conversion. What did you learn? *Today's Readings: Acts 9:1-20; Psalm 117:1bc, 2; John 6:52-59.*

### Saturday, April 21 Spirit and Life

In the Gospel, Jesus notes that his words are spirit and life. This may seem abstract, but consider the Liturgy of the Word at Mass. The Word proclaimed is the living Word that resonates in our hearts and stirs us from our complacency. It is the Good News of Jesus Christ that enlivens our hearts and fills us with the Spirit so that we may not only have everlasting life but also share with others the saving Word. How can you make God's Word more a part of your life? *Today's Readings: Acts 9:31-42; Psalm 116:12-13, 14-15, 16-17; John 6:60-69.*

