

## SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

In the second Sunday of Easter the Gospel reading tells us that Jesus came into the room where his friends were gathered together.

Besides this next Sunday Pope Benedict XVI will beatify his predecessor John Paul II. The Church will add the new Blessed John Paul II to the number of those who have truly seen the Lord. John Paul II the Pilgrim Pope, the Pope of the Youth, the Pope in love with Christ and humankind, the Pope of social justice.

### FIRST READING – Acts 2,42-47

- These verses describe the life of the first community of the followers of Jesus.
- Community formed by men and women impacted by the resurrection of Jesus; the Jesus whom they had seen on the cross; or had heard about.
- The first community of followers devoted themselves to
  - the teachings of the apostles
  - The communal life
  - The breaking of the bread
  - The prayers
- Is it not that what we do in our communities?
  - In the celebration of the Eucharist or Mass
    - We listen to the Readings from Scripture, “the instruction of the apostles.”
    - We pray together
    - We “break the bread” of the Eucharistic communion.
- Do we not put our goods in common? Some do it more radically while others do it in a less drastic way, but we all share our goods through
  - The social works of the Church
  - The works of charity when our brothers and sisters are in need
  - Helping with the expenses and maintenance of our parishes, where we meet as the XXI century community of the followers of Jesus
- But let us ask ourselves : does our enthusiasm about the resurrection of Jesus resemble their enthusiasm? Or maybe time has caused our enthusiasm, and our love for Christ and for his suffering members, to cool off?

The responsorial psalm invites us to give thanks, and reminds us of the goodness of our God who has raised Jesus, the Stone which the builders rejected and which has become the corner stone.

### FIRST LETTER OF PETER

Let us say something about this letter of Peter. In the New Testament we find two letters of Peter, the first letter of Peter and the second letter of Peter.

- ★ The letter begins saying “Peter, apostle of Christ to the elected...” and ends sending greetings from Babylon, name given to Rome.
- ★ In chapter 5 the author speaks of himself as elder and witness to the passion and glory of Christ.
- ★ From the beginning of the Church the author of this letter was considered to be Peter for the reasons mentioned above.
- ★ However for some this affirmation presents some difficulties for the following reasons:
  - The literary style as well as the Greek language of this letter do not seem to come from a fisherman from Galilee.
  - The biblical quotes are taken from the Greek Bible instead of the Hebrew one.
  - There is also a lack of references to his personal memories as a close companion of Jesus.
- ★ However there is nothing definite because there are not sufficient arguments to prove either of the two positions.
- ★ This letter has 5 chapters, and it resembles more a homily than a letter.

- ★ The theme is the passion of Christ related to the sufferings of the addressee of the letter.
- ★ They knew very well what were the consequences of baptism; the persecutions and sufferings that awaited them. Thus there are many references within the letter to the baptismal catechesis and liturgy.
- ★ Peter reminds them of the future that will be theirs if they remain faithful.

## SECOND READING 1Pt 1,3-9

- Thanksgiving to the Father who has given new life to us through the death and resurrection of his son Jesus.
- The hope we have is the inheritance that cannot be destroyed because it is in heaven.
- God protects us so that we may be able to attain this inheritance.
- After mentioning hope, the author of the letter speaks of faith. He invites us to rejoice in the midst of the difficulties that put our faith to the test.
- He says something which is really beautiful: “although you have never seen the Lord, you love him.” This sentence seems to be the echo of what John will write in his gospel: Blest are they who have not seen and believed.”
- The faith in Him produces a joy impossible to describe, joy because we are saved by the Lord.
- Is our hope, faith and love for the Lord so strong that they give us this overflowing joy?

## GOSPEL Jn 20,19-31

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week... what day is that ? The day of the resurrection. Jesus appears to his own, who are hiding because they are afraid.

- ✚ The Lord comes and stands before them. He shows them his hands and his side, so they may realize that it is Jesus himself. He allows them to touch him to help them understand that he is not a ghost or an illusion of their mind.
- ✚ His presence brings peace. The peace he gives, peace that produces joy in their hearts.
- ✚ He sends them as he had been sent by the Father. He gives them the Holy Spirit who will help them to forgive.
- ✚ When he comes back the next Sunday, with love and tenderness he invites Thomas to touch him.
- ✚ Thomas says in response the beautiful prayer “My Lord and my God.”
- ✚ And Jesus tells to him and to all of us “You have believed because you have seen, but blessed are those who will believe without seeing.”
- ✚ Is it not that our happiness and blessedness? We have not seen physically the Lord, but as Peter says we love him and believe in him.

## CLARETIAN CORNER



The missionary must be always kind and be all to all but without losing his composure and religious circumspection

The whole world must be country for the missionary of Christ, because our Divine Redeemer came to redeem all, sending to preach the same Gospel all over the world.(María Antonia París, Foundress of the Claretian Missionary Sisters; *The Apostolic Missionary*, part II,1 & 10.)

In many passages of the Bible I felt the voice of God calling me to go forth and preach. The same thing happened to me while I was at prayer. Thus it was that I determined to leave the parish and go to Rome, to present myself to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith so that they could send me anywhere in the world. (St. Anthony Mary Claret, Founder of the Claretian Missionary Sisters; *Autobiography* 120.)

