

# SPIRITUAL LIFE

## Third Sunday of Easter

By: Fr. Greg Ames

Lucian Truscott describes a busy morning in his kitchen: *running through the every day duties necessary to launch an 8 year old on a week in 3rd grade.* In the midst of going through an extensive check list, his daughter Lilly springs into the room and asks, excitedly, *Daddy may I please have pancakes for breakfast?* Truscott replies immediately, *It's a school morning. How does cheerios and orange juice and a half a bagel sound?* As Lily turns to get dressed she pleads one more time, *Please daddy, I really want pancakes.* At that moment, Truscott reflects: *My mother and father adhered to an unwritten dictum that pancakes belonged to that pantheon of dishes defined as so delicious that they couldn't be good for you, so they were relegated to the rarefied status of Sunday morning treat-and not every Sunday either. Now here I was reacting to Lilly's desire for pancakes in the way every enlightened boomer parent swore he or she would never behave: just like my own parents.* Thus began many mornings of eating pancakes in the Truscott home, and the creation of the essay titles *With Pancakes, Every Day is Sunday.*

The disciple realize the tomb is empty in the morning. It is no small thing that the Risen Jesus appears to his disciples at the start of a day. Easter is not only an event that happened on a Sunday thousands of years ago. It is a promise that with Jesus, every day is Sunday. A new beginning is possible every day of your life. On a back to work Monday; on a boring Thursday; on a rainy Tuesday; on a Saturday filled with many activities. That is the promise Jesus makes at that breakfast. A new beginning is always possible. We must do more than just show up for the meal. In order for a new beginning to take place in our lives, we have to do what Peter did.

**JUMP IN** In the eyes of the world, Peter was one big old failure. He left his job to follow this guy named Jesus who gets himself killed. Big waste of time, during which Peter acted like a coward and winds up back at his old job. In the midst of all the disappointment the coulda shoulda woulda thinking, Jesus appears. Notice what Peter did. Doesn't analyze; doesn't think *boy Jesus must be mad at me.* He jumps in. you do not have to be

trapped by your own sin, your disappointment, your fear of what will Jesus think. A new beginning will happen if you jump in.

### BRING IT TO JESUS

I love the image of the disciples hauling the nets in, bursting with fish, but the nets not tearing. Scholars tell us it represents the community of believers; there is room for everyone. But I think of those smelly, dirty wet nets being dragged to Jesus; and I think of the lives of the disciples; I think of our lives. Jesus wants you to bring to him not only where you are fresh and clean and lovely; but also the parts of your life that are messy, and smelly and complicated. He wants you to bring it all to him. A new beginning can take place when we bring all of our life to the Risen Jesus.

### LIVE THE ANSWER

Three times Jesus asks Peter if he loves him; three times Peter had denied Jesus. This is not a test from Jesus, that Peter has to worry about getting the right answer. It is a way of Jesus telling Peter, and us, that being his disciple is not simply about what you know, but how you live. What is important is not what Peter answers in the Gospel, but how he lives the answer in the first reading. He is ready and willing to serve, to feed, to lead, even if it gets him in trouble. A new beginning can take place when we realize a life of faith is not only learned, but lived. On a flight back from Toronto I watched in both amusement and disbelief the behavior of people as the plane pulled into the terminal. We were hardly stopped and cell phones were being used, the overhead bins opened, and people from the back were running forward to be the first out. Having just read the essay I thought, these people need pancakes. In a few moments, you will be fed at the table of the Lord. Might I suggest as you go back to your seat, not out the door, but back to your seat, that you take your time, you look around, and ask why do I rush, what is so important, where do I miss the Risen Jesus coming to me, and what is my answer when the One who took the time to feed me asks, *Do you love me?*

## READINGS OF THE WEEK

Acts 5:27-41

Revelations 5:11-14

John 21:1-19

April 14, 2013

# 靈 修 生 活

## 教 會

吳 智 勳 神 父

本週的福音大概是附錄，加上去的時候可能伯多祿已逝世，而耶穌的所愛的門徒仍然活著。這個附錄清楚啓示基督教會的面貌，讓我們就以教會為主題作反省。

教會是傳福音的團體：福音讀經說：「西滿伯多祿對其他門徒說，我要去打魚。」通常船是代表教會，而打魚則象徵傳福音。教會的首要工作是傳福音，這是耶穌給予教會的使命，若教會只專注社會服務而不傳福音，就喪失她本有的價值。教會內每位基督徒也肩負為主捕魚的使命，不傳福音就不是使徒。

教會是互相合作的團體：當伯多祿說要去打魚時，其他門徒說：「我們與你一起去」。福音記載當時共有七人，「七」是聖經中的圓滿數字，這裡清楚顯示傳福音不是某一個人的責任，而是整個教會合作的事工。所以，我們都該反省：我有沒有把天主給我的恩賜去豐富教會，願意和別人合作，加入傳福音的行列？一個人我行我素，就沒有教會，「教會」一詞原來的意思便是群眾聚會。

教會是分擔喜樂及痛苦的團體：一起同心合意工作自有一份團結的喜樂，但七人整夜打魚而一無所獲，也令人十分沮喪。教會同樣亦得接受這種境況，學習在痛苦中互相扶持，使她成為一個既可以分享喜樂亦能夠分擔痛苦的團體。

教會是極需要基督臨在的團體：打魚本是晚間好，而門徒對捕魚本亦甚有經驗，但人的努力和經驗並未能使他們取得好成績。作者取其象徵意義，黑夜缺乏光明，要到基督出現，光明才來臨。因此門徒要到清晨，跟隨耶穌在岸上的提示後才有魚獲。同樣，我們傳福音時可能用上所有現代人的科技，包括傳媒的先進技巧和做足市場調查工作等，但不要忘记，科技不會帶來信德，基督的臨在與聆聽祂的話才是最重要。

教會是愛主、歡迎主的團體：耶穌所愛的門徒比別人快一步認出主來。的確，愛主的人與耶穌有一份感通，容易察覺主的臨在，也應幫助別人體認主的臨在。伯多祿一聽到是主，就馬上披上外衣，跳進水裡去，反映出他對主的殷切期待。我們不妨自問：我們這個信仰團體，有能力助人經驗主的臨在嗎？能像伯多祿一樣熱切期待耶穌基督嗎？

教會是大公的團體：門徒網了一百五十三條魚，而網又不會破。聖奧思定曾有一巧妙的解釋：舊約有十誡，新約有聖神七恩，十加七是十七；如果把由一到十七的數字加起來，其總和剛好是一百五十三。聖奧思定以此說明教會能容納新舊約的人，而新舊約都能帶人到同一的基督面前。一般的解釋卻認為、當時的人以為天下只有一百五十三種魚，所以此數表示教會是大公的，歡迎天下所有人加入，而她必定容納得來(網不會破)。

教會應是積極進取、將天主放在首位的團體：耶穌問伯多祿：「若望的兒子西滿，你比他們更愛我嗎？」這句說話能夠翻譯為：若望的兒子西滿，你愛我多過其他東西嗎？意思是說：你是否把我放在生命中的首要位置？或者，「更愛」是有不停步、積極進取地去愛的意思。基督徒不能說：我的愛有限度，是到此為止；基督徒常能為耶穌的緣故去「更愛」，教會應懷著一個「更愛」的心態去牧養基督的羊群。

我們不妨細味本週的福音，問問自己：作為教會的一分子，我有沒有一份傳福音的熱誠呢？我是否願意與其他基督徒合作，分擔他們的苦樂，還是喜歡獨來獨往呢？我是否時常聆聽天主聖言，熱切期待主的臨在呢？我有沒有一份大公的精神，對非我族類能包容歡迎呢？最後，我有沒有以主為先，為了祂而無止境地「更」愛呢？

摘自公教報

## 本 週 讀 經

二零一三年四月十四日

宗 5:27-41； 默 5:11-14； 若 21:1-19