



Third Sunday of Easter

The Peace of Christ

Focus: To be peacemakers as Christ is.

Lectionary #47

Acts 3:13–15, 17–19

Psalm 4:2, 4, 7–8, 9 (7a)

1 John 2:1–5a

Luke 24:35–48

Catechist's Context

The story of Christ's Resurrection is not a ghost story! Christ possesses a glorified but real human body and demonstrates this to his friends by eating with them and inviting them to touch him. Emphasize this reality to the children.

Focus on Church Teaching

Christ's gift of his peace is the source of all earthly peace (CCC, 2305). More than the absence of conflict, it is the work of justice and the effect of charity (CCC, 2304). The Church, through the handing on of the Gospel, furthers the spread of peace throughout the world (GS, 89).



Liturgical Calendar Connection

Ask students to find today's date on the liturgical calendar. Point out what feast days are coming up this week. As a group, choose one saint to read more about (see pages vi–viii for more information about the saints). In the Gospel today, Jesus reveals himself to the disciples by breaking bread with them. How did the saint we hear about today reveal to others Christ's presence (by helping someone in need, praying for others, etc.)? How can our everyday actions reveal Christ to others?

Sign of the Cross

All stand and make the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 24:32

Alleluia, alleluia.

Lord Jesus, open the Scriptures to us; make our hearts burn while you speak to us.

Alleluia, alleluia.

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.

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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Reflection

Witness to Christ's Love and Peace

☉ Does the greeting "Peace be with you" sound familiar? In what context do you know this greeting?

☉ What does this gesture mean for you?

As in John's account of the appearance of Jesus to his Apostles after the Resurrection, Jesus' first words in Luke also include a blessing of peace. Imagine the days after Jesus' crucifixion and death: the disciples were very likely feeling lost and inconsolable. They were feeling scared of authorities coming after them too. But Jesus came back and appeared to them to reassure them—to wish them peace. He wants the disciples to know that he is alive, that he's not a ghost.

☉ Why does Luke describe Jesus eating the fish among his disciples in such detail? What point is Luke trying to make?

Luke's description of Jesus eating with his Apostles communicates two important truths to us. First, this scene makes it clear that Jesus is not a ghost. When we speak of the Resurrection of Christ, and of our own resurrections one day through him, we are talking about a resurrection

of the whole person, body and soul. While we don't know what our glorified bodies will look like, the Gospel reminds us that all that makes us truly ourselves in this life will live on into eternal life. Theologian Bishop Robert Barron compares the mortal body and the glorified body to a triangle and a pyramid. A pyramid maintains the triangle's shape but it is something with more dimension. Second, the scene reminds us that the sharing of a meal is crucial in building any community, especially the Church. It is through our gathering together each Sunday to share the common meal of the Eucharist that we grow in love for one another and for Christ.

☉ How have you experienced a feeling of community in your parish?

☉ What does receiving the Eucharist mean to you?

At the end of the Gospel, Jesus tells his Apostles that they are witnesses. Being a witness means that you have a special understanding of a certain event because you have been there; you've seen it firsthand. The disciples have been with Jesus from his days of ministry—preaching, teaching, and healing. Jesus, through his Resurrection, enables his Apostles to understand the meaning of why he died. His crucifixion was not the senseless and tragic death of an innocent man that it seemed to be. It was actually the final act in a life devoted completely to love and obedience to his Father's will. Through his death and Resurrection, Jesus has transformed all of creation, delivered us from evil, and established the Kingdom of God. Jesus now wants his followers to go out and tell everyone what they have witnessed, so that others may come to follow Christ. Just as the disciples were called to witness to Christ's love and peace, so are we.

☉ How might you testify to the love and peace of Christ so that others may know him too?

Divine Reading

You will need a Bible to lead this activity.

This activity is a simplified version of a traditional type of Catholic prayer known as *lectio divina* or "divine reading." When we use Scripture to pray in this way, we focus on a particular word or image in the reading that resonates with us.

Begin with a prayer to the Holy Spirit. Together with the children, ask the Holy Spirit to open your hearts and minds as you (re)read the Gospel so that, through the story of the Risen Christ's appearance to his disciples, you might hear the words Jesus wishes you to hear and be attentive to their meaning. After a moment of silence, but before you begin to read the Gospel to the children, encourage them to pay attention to any word or image in the passage that stands out for them.

Then, slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel. When you are finished, allow another moment of silence. (Sometimes it helps to maintain that moment of silence if you slowly and silently count to ten.) Then ask the children what words or details in the Gospel they remember. If the children are not forthcoming with reactions, try prompts such as: "Why do you think Jesus ate the fish?" or "What did Jesus say to his disciples?" Close by inviting the children to share their overall thoughts and feelings of the Gospel's message.

Being a Witness to Jesus

You will need a board, paper, and writing materials to lead this activity.

Write the following sentence starter on the board: "I am a witness to Christ's love when I ____." Remind the children that in the Gospel Jesus calls on all of us to be the witnesses of his great love and peace to all of the world. Ask the children to find partners and to work together to list examples of how they witness to Jesus. Provide a few examples, such as: "I am a witness to Christ's love when I am patient with my little sister or brother," and "I am a witness to Christ's love when I volunteer to help organize the food drive at school." Ask the children to write realistic statements, as they will choose one or two to act on in the coming week. (Follow up in the next week or two to find out how the children put these statements into practice.)

Living the Liturgy at Home

Third Sunday of Easter



Scripture Readings

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

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

1 John 2:1-5a

Luke 24:35-48

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
we rejoice with all of creation
because you have risen from the dead.
As we celebrate the fifty days of Easter,
help us to understand the meaning
of your empty tomb:

death does not have the last word;

light will triumph over darkness;

sadness will be conquered by hope.

Make us people of life, light, and hope,

and show us how to share our

Christian joy

with others.

You live and reign with God the Father

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God for ever and ever.

Amen. Alleluia!

?? Did You Know?

. . . that throughout Easter Time, we rejoice in our Baptism and our membership in the Church? At Mass during this liturgical season, we may celebrate a Sprinkling Rite instead of the Penitential Rite. We are sprinkled with holy water to remind us of our Baptism.

Conversation Questions

☉ How do you imagine eternal life? Does it reassure you that the resurrection involves eternal life of body and soul?

☉ How might each of you become peacebuilders—in the ways you speak or act toward one other at home? at school? in the workplace?

Faith in Action

Reflect on the Sign of Peace that we share with others at Mass. Christ's peace is shared among the assembly. Talk about how we also know Christ's peace through the sacrament of Reconciliation. Set aside time this week for your family members who are able to receive this special grace, God's forgiveness and gift of peace.

Third Sunday of Easter (Year B)

Readings:

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19 You denied the Righteous One and in ignorance put to death the author of life. So repent, that your sins may be wiped away.

Psalm 4 Lord, let your face shine on us.

1 John 2:1-5 If any should sin, we have Jesus, an Advocate with the Father and expiation for the whole world's sins.

Luke 24:35-48 The risen Jesus appears again: "Peace!" To allay their fears, he lets the disciples touch him, and he eats with them. It was written that the Christ would suffer and be raised from the dead. You are witnesses of this.

Catechism:

597-598 Sinners bear responsibility for Christ's death.

519, 601 Christ, our advocate who always intercedes for us, died for our sins.

654 Resurrection reinstates us in God's grace so that we might walk in newness of life.

1362-1367 Eucharist as memorial of Christ's Passover.

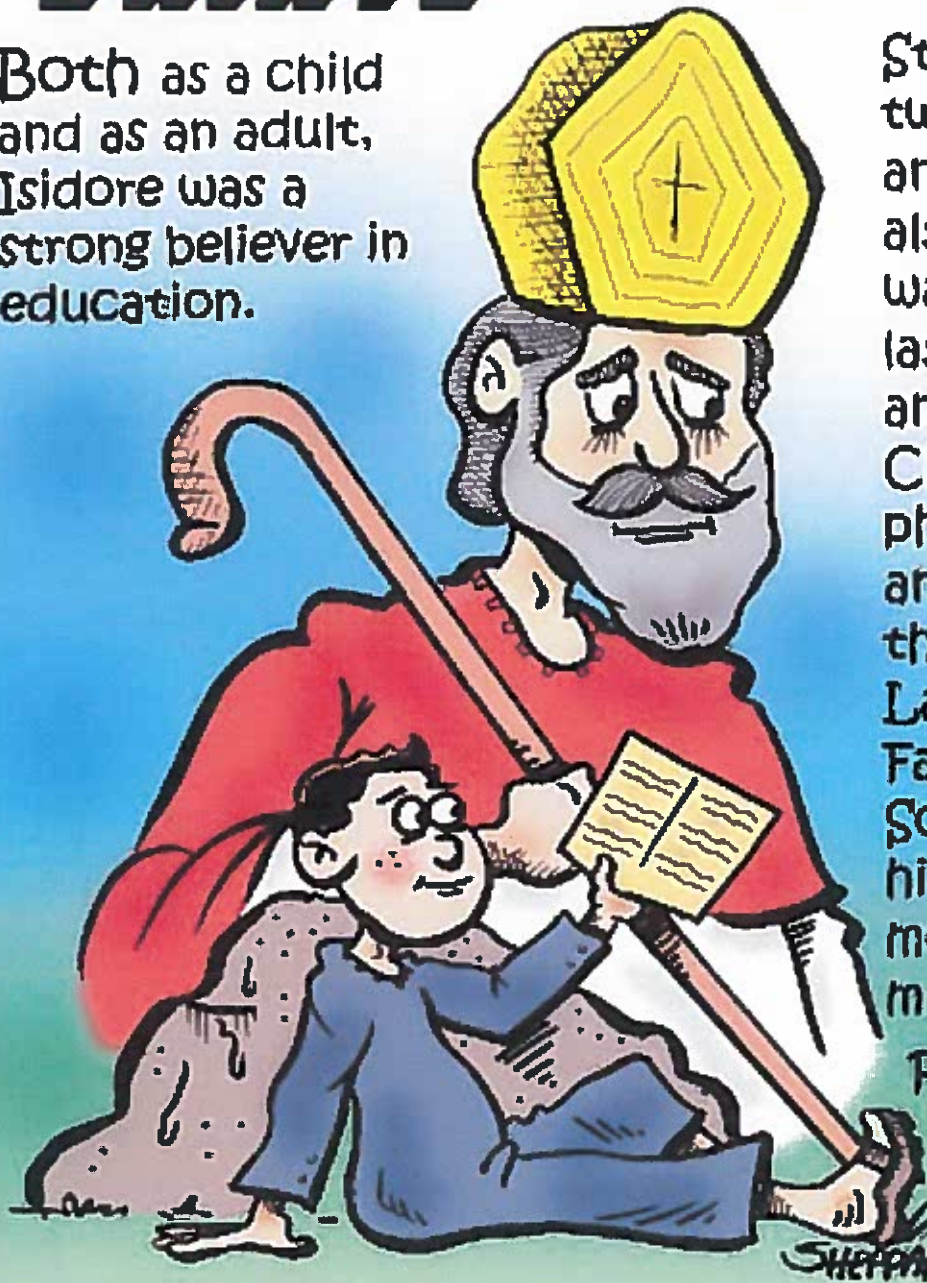
1168-1171 Easter as the heart of the Church year: All of life stands in the light of the Paschal mystery.

http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc/ccc_toc2.htm

Teachings I want to share with my class

SAINTS FUN FACTS

Both as a child and as an adult, Isidore was a strong believer in education.



St. Isidore's two brothers and sister are also saints. He was one of the last of the ancient Christian philosophers and the last of the great Latin Church Fathers. Some consider him to be the most learned man of his age.

Patron Saint
of the
Internet

Isidore was literally born into a family of saints in sixth century Spain. Two of his brothers, Leander and Fulgentius, and one of his sisters, Florentina, are revered as saints in Spain. It was also a family of leaders and strong minds with Leander and Fulgentius serving as bishops and Florentina as abbess.

This didn't make life easier for Isidore. To the contrary, Leander may have been holy in many ways, but his treatment of his little brother shocked many even at the time. Leander, who was much older than Isidore, took over Isidore's education and his pedagogical theory involved force and punishment. We know from Isidore's later accomplishments that he was intelligent and hard-working so it is hard to understand why Leander thought abuse would work instead of patience.

One day, the young boy couldn't take any more. Frustrated by his inability to learn as fast as his brother wanted and hurt by his brother's treatment, Isidore ran away. But though he could escape his brother's hand and words, he couldn't escape his own feeling of failure and rejection. When he finally let the outside world catch his attention, he noticed water dripping on the rock near where he sat. The drops of water that fell repeatedly carried no force and seemed to have no effect on the solid stone. And yet he saw that over time, the water drops had worn holes in the rock.

Isidore realized that if he kept working at his studies, his seemingly small efforts would eventually pay off in great learning. He also may have hoped that his efforts would also wear down the rock of his brother's heart.

When he returned home, however, his brother in exasperation confined him to a cell (probably in a monastery) to complete his studies, not believing that he wouldn't run away again.

Either there must have been a loving side to this relationship or Isidore was remarkably forgiving even for a saint, because later he would work side by side with his brother and after Leander's death, Isidore would complete many of the projects he began including a missal and breviary.

In a time where it's fashionable to blame the past for our present and future problems, Isidore was able to separate the abusive way he was taught from the joy of learning. He didn't run from learning after he left his brother but embraced education and made it his life's work. Isidore rose above his past to become known as the greatest teacher in Spain.

His love of learning made him promote the establishment of a seminary in every diocese of Spain. He didn't limit his own studies and didn't want others to as well. In a unique move, he made sure that all branches of knowledge including the arts and medicine were taught in the seminaries.

His encyclopedia of knowledge, the *Etymologies*, was a popular textbook for nine centuries. He also wrote books on grammar, astronomy, geography, history, and biography as well as theology. When the Arabs brought study of Aristotle back to Europe, this was nothing new to Spain because Isidore's open mind had already reintroduced the philosopher to students there.

As bishop of Seville for 37 years, succeeding Leander, he set a model for representative government in Europe. Under his direction, and perhaps remembering the tyrannies of his brother, he rejected autocratic decision-making and organized synods to discuss government of the Spanish Church.

Still trying to wear away rock with water, he helped convert the barbarian Visigoths from Arianism to Christianity.

He lived until almost 80. As he was dying his house was filled with crowds of poor he was giving aid and alms to. One of his last acts was to give all his possessions to the poor.

When he died in 636, this Doctor of the Church had done more than his brother had ever hoped; the light of his learning caught fire in Spanish minds and held back the Dark Ages of barbarism from Spain. But even greater than his outstanding mind must have been the genius of his heart that allowed him to see beyond rejection and discouragement to joy and possibility.