

Rectoría de San Juan de Dios
III Sunday of Easter, Cycle B
Acts 3, 13-15.17-19; Ps 4; 1Jn 2, 1-5; Luke 24, 35-48
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Let Us Open Our Understanding

The event of Christ's resurrection is not something easy to understand. Two thousand years ago, the disciples had as many or more problems than we have in understanding the mystery of Christ. It was necessary for Jesus, the Risen Glorified One, to appear many times to help them understand the mystery that would give life to all humanity. Jesus was not just an extraordinary man, but the Son of God who, having been made man, rose for us so that we could have the life that we have today. If Jesus had been only an historical character, He would have been forgotten by the end of the first century. But that was not the case; in Jesus, each of us has been elevated to a full relationship with God so that we have a supernatural life of grace. It is necessary to understand our humanity as a body and soul, as an indivisible unity, in order to discern the design of God.

Today, through the Gospel of Luke, we are introduced to the cenacle where Jesus appears and, from there, to the new cenacle on the altar of our church; and we can confirm that His humanity is glorified, that Jesus is not a ghost. We can confirm His living presence, here and now, like the disciples two thousand years ago: *“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.”*

We want to open our understanding, to go beyond the categories of knowledge that the world offers us; they are reductive categories and are based on the phenomenological experience of things as they appear, and not on the transcendent experience of being.

How can we open our understanding? Let us persevere in these three exercises:

1-Let us confirm that God fulfills his plan.

Peter makes the authorities of his time see that the master of history is not man but God. *“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...has glorified His servant Jesus.”* This is a Peter different from the man who denied Jesus three times; it is a Peter who confirms that future history is not finished. If we pay attention, we can understand the event of Christ as the epicenter of a reality that still extends to us today. God has a plan of salvation in which we have a place. God has a personal plan for each one of us in which all of our expectations will be fulfilled.

What has God promised you at your Baptism and from each Sacrament? Although we go through unclear times in our lives, the final design of God is not yet accomplished. We have to open up our understanding in order to comprehend the history of the world as the history of salvation in which God appears.

2-Let us practice love.

The best way to open our understanding is love, love as a form of knowledge. This means to enter into harmony with the mystery of Christ. It means to experience love in the way of the prophets; for them, to know God is the same as practicing justice and defending the oppressed. To be loving to whoever around us is in need introduces us

to an experience of profound, immeasurable knowledge. It is only if I bend down to love someone who is fallen that I will know his pain, his miseries, his aspirations, and his real person. It is thanks to this practice that I know myself, that I prove to myself how far I am able to know and love God in others; and it is how I can say that I know God.

3-Let us experience humanity glorified.

That is what the disciples experienced on that occasion: Jesus with His own body but glorified. To open our understanding, it is essential to see beyond appearances, beyond the signs. At times it is necessary to read another language, one without words. It means to dare to interpret in appearances the invisible reality that sustains life.¹

Can you describe your humanity glorified? Is it possible that our flesh can show our glorification? And the answer has to be Yes. It is hard for us to grasp this reality because we are contaminated by the Platonic philosophy that separates the body from the soul to the point of making

¹ An experience with a young man one morning after Mass could shed light on this particular idea. He was about 25 years old, a young man far from the Church and a member of a gang. He took me to his home to help his mother who was lying on the floor on the entryway. Since the mother was dying, I gave her the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and the young man appeared a little comforted. But as I was leaving the house, he stopped me to thank me and to open his heart. Through what he said, it was apparent that he was being reached by the glorification of Christ; that young man was on the threshold of greater understanding. I needed to interpret his language when he repeated, "I am alone..." and in an instant, he embraced me, crying a long time for the loss of the last loved one in his life. It can happen to us that we might not be capable of understanding when the mystery of Christ appears, when the fruit of His Cross comes through to begin to glorify us.

the two elements easily separable. But Jesus shows us that the flesh, our corporeal being, is the means by which we enter into contact with the natural world, with others, and with God Himself.

Jesus gives His disciples proof of His identity by asking them to touch Him, as flesh and bone; He even eats a piece of fish in front of them. It is the same for us. The totality of our person is our body and our soul; our person includes all that we have lived through. We are being traversed by life itself.

Jesus, once He is resurrected, does not live as before; His existence is different. Nevertheless, the signs of His passion and death show through. Everything is real, even though it may be with another equally tangible expression.

We need to awaken our sensitivity to understand what the foolish will never grasp—to interpret the language of love, of necessity, of accompaniment...