# Third Sunday of Easter (A)

**Gospel text (*Lk* 24:13-35):** That very day, the first day of the week, two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.

He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see."

And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures. As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over."

So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they

recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?” So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, “The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!” Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

***“That very day, the first day of the week”***

Fr. Jaume GONZÁLEZ i Padrós
*(Barcelona, Spain)*

Today we begin the proclamation of the Gospel with the expression, "That very day, the first day of the week" (Lk 24:13). Yes, still Sunday. Easter is like a great Sunday of fifty days. Oh, if we only knew the importance of this day in the life of Christians! "There are reasons to say, as suggested by the homily of an author of the 4th century (Pseudo-Eusebius of Alexandria), that the 'Day of the Lord' is the 'Lord of Days' (...). Indeed, this is the 'primary feast' for Christians" (Saint John Paul II). Sunday, for us, is like a mother's womb, a cradle, a celebration, a home, and also missionary inspiration. Oh, if we glimpsed the light and poetry it brings! Then we would affirm like those martyrs of the early centuries: "We cannot live without Sunday."

But when the Lord's day loses its importance in our existence, the "Lord of the day" also fades away, and we become so pragmatic and "serious" that we only give credit to our projects and plans; then, even the very freedom with which God acts becomes a source of scandal and distance for us. Ignoring the wonder, we close ourselves off to the most luminous manifestation of God's glory, and everything becomes a sunset of disappointment, a prelude to an endless night where life seems condemned to perpetual insomnia.

However, the Gospel proclaimed in the midst of Sunday assemblies is always the angelic announcement of a clarity directed at minds and hearts slow to believe (cf. Lk 24:25), and for this reason, it is gentle, not explosive, since otherwise, it would blind us instead of illuminating us. It is the Life of the Resurrected One that the Spirit communicates to us through the Word and the broken Bread, respecting our journey made up of short and not always well-directed steps.

Let us remember every Sunday that Jesus "went in to stay with them" (Lk 24:29), with us. Have you recognized Him today, Christian?

## *Thoughts on Today's Gospel*

- "During these days the Lord joined two of his disciples as their companion on the road, and by chiding them for their timidity and hesitant fears he swept away all the clouds of our uncertainty. Their lukewarm hearts were fired by the light of faith and began to burn within them as the Lord opened up the Scriptures." (Saint Leo the Great)

- "Encountering God in prayer, the reading of the Bible and in the fraternal life will help you better to know the Lord and yourselves, to discover the loving plan He has for your life." (Pope Francis)

- "The Gospels are the heart of all the Scriptures "because they are our principal source for the life and teaching of the Incarnate Word, our Savior (Second Vatican Council)." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 125)