

Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two more of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said, 'I'm going fishing.' They replied, 'We'll come with you.' They went out and got into the boat but caught nothing that night.

It was light by now and there stood Jesus on the shore, though the disciples did not realise that it was Jesus. Jesus called out, 'Have you caught anything, friends?' And when they answered, 'No', he said, 'Throw the net out to starboard and you'll find something.' So they dropped the net, and there were so many fish that they could not haul it in. The disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord.' At these words 'It is the Lord', Simon Peter, who had practically nothing on, wrapped his cloak round him and jumped into the water. The other disciples came on in the boat, towing the net and the fish; they were only about a hundred yards from land.

As soon as they came ashore they saw that there was some bread there, and a charcoal fire with fish cooking on it. Jesus said, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.' Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net to the shore, full of big fish, one hundred and fifty-three of them; and in spite of there being so many the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples was bold enough to ask, 'Who are you?'; they knew quite well it was the Lord. Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish. This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples after rising from the dead.

■ **The Gospel of the Lord.**

Longer form Jn 21:1-19

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Reflections on the Gospel



THE SAVING WORD

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER / C

05 MAY 2019

THREE TIMES: 'DO YOU LOVE ME?'

Today's Gospel describes an appearance of the risen Lord to seven of the male disciples by the Lake of Galilee.

Led by Peter, they have reverted to their old trade of fishing. This might seem to be something of a falling-away from their high calling. But in the gospel tradition, fishing for fish (that is, ordinary fishing) is a symbol of the mission of the Church. Encounter with the risen Lord will finally transform them from fishers of fish into fishers of people.

When 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' (traditionally associated with St John) recognises Jesus on the shore, Peter shows the ardour of his love by jumping into the sea and swimming to Jesus, who, in a delightfully human touch, has prepared breakfast for the group, kindling a charcoal fire.

As Good Shepherd, Jesus has laid down his life for the sheep entrusted to him by the Father (John 10:11,14-16). Now that shepherding role is going to fall to Simon Peter. But first his readiness for it must be probed and tested. Only if Peter loves Jesus 'more than these others' will he be suitable to take up the pastoral role which Jesus has exercised to the point of death.

The triple interrogation concerning love both gently recalls and lovingly repairs the triple failure when, alongside an earlier charcoal fire, fear led Peter to deny Jesus three times. In fact, as Jesus goes on to say, Peter will end his term as chief pastor by laying down his life in imitation of his Lord.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

FIRST READING

Acts 5:27-32,40-41

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

We are witnesses of these words, and so is the Holy Spirit.

The high priest demanded an explanation of the apostles. 'We gave you a formal warning,' he said 'not to preach in this name, and what have you done? You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and seem determined to fix the guilt of this man's death on us.' In reply Peter and the apostles said, 'Obedience to God comes before obedience to men; it was the God of our ancestors who raised up Jesus, but it was you who had him executed by hanging on a tree. By his own right hand God has now raised him up to be leader and saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins through him to Israel. We are witnesses to all this, we and the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.' They warned the apostles not to speak in the name of Jesus and released them. And so they left the presence of the Sanhedrin glad to have had the honour of suffering humiliation for the sake of the name.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

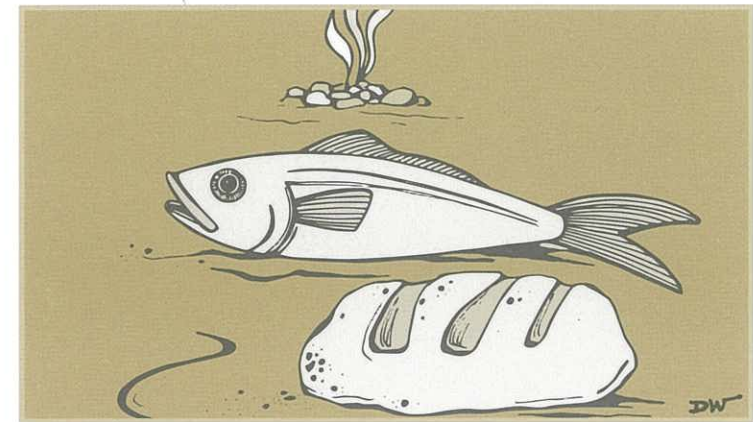
RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 29:2,4-6,11-13.R.v.2

R. I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me. (or Alleluia!)

1. I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me and have not let my enemies rejoice over me. / O Lord, you have raised my soul from the dead, / restored me to life from those who sink into the grave. **R.**

2. Sing psalms to the Lord, you who love him, give thanks to his holy name. / His anger lasts but a moment; his favour through life. / At night there are tears, / but joy comes with dawn. **R.**

3. The Lord listened and had pity. / The Lord came to my help. / For me you have changed my mourning into dancing; / O Lord my God, I will thank you for ever. **R.**



SECOND READING

Apoc 5:11-14

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse

The Lamb that was sacrificed is worthy to be given power, wealth, glory, and blessing.

In my vision, I, John, heard the sound of an immense number of angels gathered round the throne and the animals and the elders; there were ten thousand times ten thousand of them and thousands upon thousands, shouting, 'The Lamb that was sacrificed is worthy to be given power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory and blessing.' Then I heard all the living things in creation – everything that lives in the air and on the ground, and under the ground, and in the sea, crying, 'To the One who is sitting on the throne and to the Lamb, be all praise, honour, glory and power, for ever and ever.' And the four animals said, 'Amen'; and the elders prostrated themselves to worship.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Christ is risen; the Lord of all creation; he has shown pity on all people. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Jn 21:1-14

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.

Jesus showed himself again to the disciples. It was by the Sea of Tiberias, and it happened like this: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin,