**“Witness to His Resurrection”**

The main theme of our readings today is “Witness to His Resurrection.” The witness to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ by His apostles brought us the “Good News” of our salvation. Without His resurrection, our path to Paradise would have been closed. Without His resurrection we would be in darkness. It was His resurrection form death that brought us life.

In our first reading, after receiving the Holy Spirit during Pentecost, the Apostles who before receiving the Holy Spirit, were afraid to show their faces in public, were now emboldened by the Spirit. Peter, publicly addressed the Israelites about the evil they had done to the Messiah. Peter became a powerful witness to the resurrection of Christ. Peter emptied himself and lived only for Christ. We too should empty ourselves like Peter and be unafraid witnesses to the resurrection.

In his address, Peter pointed out that the Israelites had Jesus crucified. He said, Jesus who was sent by God performed many mighty deeds, wonders and signs that had not been seen before. According to him, all His works alone, as foretold in Scripture, should have given the Israelites confirmation that He is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Instead, they handed Him over to be crucified by pagans. God in His fore knowledge, allowed this to happen to fulfill His plan for the defeat of sin, death, and the devil.

Peter reminded them of God’s promise to king David. He reminded them of David’s words as recorded in Psalm 16: 8-11, which applies to the Messiah being raised from the dead. He reminded them that David was not referring to himself because they all knew where David was buried. So the body that could not see corruption, could not be the body of David, but that of his Lord and Master Jesus the Christ.

Peter informed them that Jesus was raised from the dead just as David had prophesied about His resurrection. Peter told them that he and his companions were eye witnesses of Him after His resurrection. What a compelling witness of Christ’s resurrection! The apostles faced threats of punishment and even death, but that did not stop them from witnessing to the truth.

Peter and his companions were ready to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ rather than obey men who were trying to stop them. He told them it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that they could, with God’s authority, witness boldly about the resurrection of Christ in their presence.

In our second reading, St. Peter told his audience who had faith in God, to remember that God, will judge everyone according to their works. He enjoins them to act with the utmost reverence as they pass through this life; and to remember that their resurrection to life, does not come through their own works, but through their working through Christ. That all we do, or say, must be attributed to the power of Christ. It is His Father who established through Christ, our foundation for hope and the precepts for our resurrection.

Peter informed them that Christ had existed before the beginning of time. That as the Son of God, He is the final revelation of God before the end of time. That after His coming, we are at period of end-time. Through His resurrection, Jesus has been glorified again by God. This is why all who have faith and hope in God, would receive the gift of their own resurrection.

In our Gospel reading, we are introduced to a beautiful story of Christ revealing Himself to two of His disciples through the breaking of the Bread. Two of Jesus’ disciples were on their way out of Jerusalem to a village seven miles away. They probably gave up hope about Jesus being their warrior (like David) who would free Israel from slavery. They wanted to get out of Dodge before things got nasty. They probably expected that their enemies would start attacking those who were Jesus’ followers as well.

As they were walking and talking about the events of the last three days, Jesus came from nowhere and joined them. He asked them of what they were talking about. Not knowing that He was Jesus, they were so shocked that they stopped walking and asked Him if He just crawled from under a rock; which would explain why He would not know about the crucifixion of Jesus.

Jesus reprimanded them for their lack of faith and knowledge of the Scripture. He then explained to them what was to happen to the Messiah as prophesied by Moses and the Prophets. On getting to Emmaus, Jesus pretended He would keep walking. So, they asked Him to stay with them and have supper.

It was during supper, that Jesus took bread, gave the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. Then, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. But He vanished from their sight before they could worship Him or ask Him any questions.

Jesus vanished from their sight, to let them know that ‘He is the Eucharist’ just as they have Him before He vanished from their sight. That is how He would be with us forever in this life. Go figure, it was at the breaking of the bread, or a Mass that the two disciples came to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. They immediately went back to Jerusalem to witness about the resurrection to the other disciples. Just as they recognized Him in the breaking of the bread. Do we also recognize Jesus in the Eucharist?

My brethren, Jesus became the firstborn of the dead and the first fruit of resurrection. It was in His resurrection that the faith of His disciples were confirmed and they went all over the world proclaiming His Gospel. It is by their witness of His resurrection that we have become His disciples. It was through the witness of His resurrection that we could have peace that we are reconciled with His Father. By our baptism, Christ has called us to witness to the Good News of His resurrection by what we do and say, so, we will be pleasing to God.

As we come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us ask Him for more grace so can be witnesses of His resurrection.