

“Purified your souls” (v. 22) probably refers to baptism, when one confesses the faith, “obedience to the truth”. Through baptism one attains true “mutual love”. The Christian is “born anew” (v. 23) in baptism through the creative “word of God”, the gospel, which “endures forever” (v. 25). Baptism brings us to a new way of living.

Luke 24:13-35

It is later on Easter Day, the day on which Mary Magdalene and the other women have discovered the empty tomb. As two of Jesus' followers walk to Emmaus, they talk about the day's news, the recent startling events. Eusebius, the first church historian, tells us that “Cleopas” (v. 18) was a relative of Jesus. The two do not recognize our Lord. Jesus asks “What things?” (v. 19). Their reply shows the limitations of their understanding of who Jesus is: they do realize that he is a prophet and, like Moses, “mighty in deed and word”, but they have no idea how much more he is. Jesus has disappointed them: they expected him to deliver Israel from Roman domination, and to begin an earthly kingdom of God (“redeem Israel”, v. 21). Three days have passed (long enough, in Jewish belief, for the soul to have left the body) and, despite Jesus' statement that he would be raised from death, nothing has happened! The women told us that he is alive, but when Peter and John went there, all they saw was the empty tomb! (v. 24). Jesus tells them how slow they are to grasp how the Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled in him. Was it not God's plan (“necessary”, v. 26) that Jesus should be crucified and ascend to be with the Father? He interprets his life as a fulfilment of all of Scripture, from “Moses” (v. 27, the first five books of the Bible) to “all the prophets”. The meal seems to be a Eucharist: “he took bread, blessed and broke it” (v. 30). Then, from Jesus' interpretation and their hospitality to this “stranger” (v. 18) “their eyes were opened” (v. 31), i.e. they develop a deeper understanding of who Jesus is, that he is divine. At the Last Supper, Jesus said he would not again share food with his disciples until God's kingdom came. He has now eaten with the two, so the Kingdom has indeed come. “The Lord has risen indeed... !” (v. 34). © 1996-2020 Chris Haslam

~ Notices ~

Ukraine Appeal clareanglicans.ie or: www.christianaid.ie

Turkey and Syria Earthquake relief - Bishop's appeal
www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org/give

Concerts:

Genie Ensemble – Friday 5th May – 7.30pm - St Columba's

Jaskane Trio – Sat 10th June, 5.00pm, St Columba's, Ennis

Book Club - 1st (or 2nd) Tuesday of every month – please ask Sue or Carolyn (St C) or Clare (SP) for details.

Confirmation - Please let the Rector know if you are thinking of becoming confirmed in 2020 – I have three names so far.

Installation as Canon—St Mary's Cathedral Limerick, Sunday May 7th at 4.00pm.

Website: clareanglicans.ie

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans

Facebook: www.facebook.com/clare.anglicans

Rector: Email: frkevinobrien@me.com

Tel: 065 672 4721

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3rd Sunday of Easter 2023 (Year A)

Readings and Hymns

Collect

Risen Christ, you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope: strengthen us to proclaim your risen life and fill us with your peace, to the glory of God the Father. **Amen**

Suggested Hymns

YouTube links are provided below:

- 1) For the beauty of the earth (350)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDnmVECSdKQ>
- 2) Love is his word, love is his way (432)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQWcTjA8e90>
- 3) Lord for the years (81)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cd14v0e1RWU>

Acts 2: 14a, 36-41

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: All who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Therefore, let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.'

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.' And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added

Psalms 116

I love the Lord,
for he has heard the voice of my supplication; ♦
because he inclined his ear to me
on the day I called to him.
The snares of death encompassed me;
the pains of hell took hold of me; ♦
by grief and sorrow was I held.
Then I called upon the name of the Lord: ♦
'O Lord, I beg you, deliver my soul.'
How shall I repay the Lord ♦
for all the benefits he has given to me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation ♦
and call upon the name of the Lord.
I will fulfil my vows to the Lord ♦
in the presence of all his people.
Precious in the sight of the Lord ♦
is the death of his faithful servants.
O Lord, I am your servant, ♦
your servant, the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me from my bonds.
I will offer to you a sacrifice of thanksgiving ♦
and call upon the name of the Lord.
I will fulfil my vows to the Lord ♦
in the presence of all his people,
In the courts of the house of the Lord, ♦
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Alleluia.

1 Peter 1: 17-23

If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God. Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

Luke 24: 13-35

Now on that same day two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.

They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Post Communion

Living God, your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in all his redeeming work; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

Commentary

Acts 2:14a,36-41 Peter now comes to the conclusion of his speech to the Jerusalem crowd, in which he interprets the event they have just witnessed: the coming of the Holy Spirit. In vv. 16-21, he has shown (from the book of Joel) that the end times, and therefore salvation, are at hand. He shows how we have access to salvation: it is through Jesus, whom God has made "both Lord and Messiah" (v. 36). It is imperative that those who hear may receive new life in Christ. Peter's words about the crowd's responsibility for Jesus' death stuns his hearers: "they were cut to the heart" (v. 37), but rather than being turned off, they ask "what should we do?". In spite of the dark deed of their past, he urges them to undergo a radical change of heart ("Repent", v. 38) to serving the living God, to be "baptised ... in the name of Jesus". Then their sins will be forgiven and they will receive the Holy Spirit (as promised by God through Joel), a promise open to "everyone" (v. 39) whom God calls and who call upon God (v. 21). "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation" (v. 40) is like Joel's call. Many ("about three thousand", v. 41, a round number) respond and are baptised; they are "added" to the 120 believers (1:15) for whom salvation has already begun; they are saved from the sin of rejecting the Messiah. They devote themselves to learning from the apostles, to "fellowship" (v. 42), participating in the Eucharist, and prayer.

Psalms 116:1-4,12-19 The psalmist tells the congregation why he loves God: "he has heard my voice". Because God helped him in his time of "distress and anguish" (v. 3, serious illness), he will "call on him" (v. 2) for the rest of his life. He was near death; he felt life slipping away. ("Sheol", v. 3, was the place of the dead. People believed that it ensnared those gravely ill.) When he called on God for help (v. 4), God "delivered ... [me] from [near] death" (v. 8). (Vv. 5-6 are a lesson for those present; the "simple" are those who are direct, rather than devious, with God.) Even when afflicted, he kept his faith in God (v. 10). He now walks before the Lord (v. 9, follows God's ways). How can he pay back God for saving him? (v. 12) He will make a drink-offering in the Temple for his deliverance and "call on the name of the Lord" (v. 13) in thanksgiving, in the presence of the worshipping community (v. 14). God almost always preserves the lives of the faithful (v. 15). He sees his status with God as being like a "child of your serving girl" (v. 16, one in perpetual servitude) but God makes him a free man ("loosed my bonds"). The "house of the Lord" (v. 19) is the Temple.

1 Peter 1:17-23 The author has urged his readers: "discipline yourselves" (v. 13), be ready for Christ's second coming. Do not fall back into the pagan immorality you practised before your conversion to the faith; rather, separate yourselves from such ways: live ethically. Now he warns that being a child of God requires that you hold him in proper respect, in "reverent fear" (v. 17) – while your ethics marginalise you from the pagan world around you ("exile"). God paid for your freedom from pagan ways (as one might ransom, v. 18, prisoners of war) not with "perishable" things but with the life of Christ. (In the Jewish idea of sacrifice, "blood", v. 19, represented life). Especially at Passover, the lamb sacrificed had to be perfect, as Jesus was. The crucifixion is very valuable ("precious"). God planned redemption through Christ from before his creative act ("destined", v. 20); with Christ's life, the final stage of history has begun ("end of the ages"). God raised Jesus to "glory" (v. 21, the sublime majesty and radiant splendour of God). Through him you have come to "trust", "faith and hope" in God.