

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Come and Eat

Invitation to Pray

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God.

Opening Song

Lord, You Have Come

or

In the Breaking of the Bread

Proclaim the Gospel

John 21:1-14

Appearance to the Seven Disciples

Take a few minutes to savor a word, a phrase, a question, or a feeling that rises up in you. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

The other Scripture readings of the day are

Acts of the Apostles 5:27-32, 40b-41,

Psalms 30:2, 4-6, 11-13,

and Revelation 5:11-14.

Invitation to Reflect on the Gospel

Jesus' followers have begun to resume their usual routines: Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, Zebedee's sons, and two unnamed disciples are at the Sea of Tiberias and head out to go fishing. Jesus has appeared to them previously, yet when he calls to them from the shore, after an unsuccessful night of fishing, they do not recognize him at first. Only after they had cast their

nets on the opposite side of the boat, as he had instructed them, did they know it was he. An explosion of joy erupts as Peter jumps into the water and swims toward Jesus!

Jesus greets them with a fully prepared breakfast at the shore. He knows they have worked hard and are tired and hungry. This meal carries an echo of the Passover celebration: a meal that reminds the people of their history with God and God's faithful presence throughout that history. It is also reminiscent of the feeding of the multitude: he knows the importance of satisfying physical hunger if people are ever to recognize their need for God. In all these appearances, Jesus is bringing his followers through the first *mystagogia*, a time of opening up the mysteries of his death and Resurrection in the daily living out of their lives. He shows them the reality of his Resurrection by eating in their presence.

In this Gospel, Jesus shows us how to care and minister to one another. Whether it was feeding a multitude, or just a small band of hungry people, Jesus attended to the needs of the body and spirit. We must be attentive to whatever needs may be presented. As we go about our daily lives, how will we develop this Christlike awareness?

At every turn, we are confronted with a profound hunger for hope, acceptance, forgiveness, and healing, not to mention an adequate portion of daily bread. How can we respond to these needs? Those who are hungry must hear and recognize Christ's voice. Let our invitation to come and eat resonate loudly enough, so those who are hungry may hear and recognize our voice as the voice of Christ.

Invitation to Group Sharing

1. Describe a time you were really hungry in your spiritual life ... a time when you felt you were anxious for God. Then share where you found the answer to your need.
2. What are the hungers I see most clearly in my own community?
3. How does our reception of the Eucharist strengthen us to reach out and meet the needs of those who are hungry?
4. How can we be the voice of Christ, in our community and beyond, offering provision for the hungers of the spirit, as well as the hungers of the body?

Invitation to Act

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. This should be your primary consideration. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. The following are secondary suggestions:

1. During your next eucharistic thanksgiving, reflect on how you might help meet the physical and spiritual hunger of others. Then do it!
2. "Adopt" an elderly person who may not get out very often; invite him or her to your home for dinner and conversation, or bring a meal to his or her home and share it.
3. Become involved in a local food pantry or soup kitchen.
4. Take turns volunteering to research any legislation (local or national) that addresses the issue of hunger

in your community. Help to keep that issue in people's minds, and look for solutions.

5. Research if local restaurants and supermarkets would donate day-old food to a local food pantry or soup kitchen. Offer to deliver food, provide volunteers to package, etc.

Invitation to Closing Prayer

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for the daily bread that nourishes our bodies as well as our spirits. Conclude with the following:

Generous God,
thank you for the homes we have
and the food on our tables.

You alone know the hungers we bear,
and how they can best be satisfied.

As we look to you for our nourishment,
open our eyes to the hungers around us
and, with the Spirit of Jesus,
give us the voice to call out the invitation,
"Come! Eat!" Amen.