

### Living the Word: Acts 3.13-15, 17-19

This passage forms the final section of Peter's speech to the people of Jerusalem after Pentecost. At the end of the speech he calls the crowds to repent and change the course of their lives. Repentance and forgiveness are central to the Christian life and we must keep ourselves in check. Jesus came to reconcile us to the Father and to one another. We must be his agents of reconciliation in a broken and divided world. Are there people in our lives who we struggle to forgive? Do we nurture anger and wrath in our heart, or do we work to open our hearts to forgiveness? This is no easy task, made exponentially more difficult by the depth of the hurt, but it is one Jesus invites us to join Him in. And that forgiveness doesn't come from our own sheer willpower. That mercy can flow in us through an outpouring of grace from the Holy Spirit, but it requires us to open our hearts to accept it. Forgiveness is a gift to both ourselves and the other person, an easing of burden and an unleashing of chains. It doesn't mean we don't speak truth to those people, but it does mean that the truth is stripped of anger and soaked in forgiveness.

14<sup>th</sup> April 2024  
Third Sunday of Easter



In the previous gospel reading the two disciples had met Jesus on their way to Emmaus. There Jesus had used the Eucharistic meal to reveal himself to them, for the Eucharist is always an occasion for us to get to know the Risen Christ better. Now he meets the whole group of disciples in their refuge, the Upper Room. The stress is on their meeting with a real person, not a disembodied ghost or phantom appearance. That is why he eats a piece of fish. The important lesson of this is that, in our resurrection to true life, it is the whole person that is raised, not just the soul. Our bodies will be so real that we will be able to eat. Christian teaching is that a person is an animated body. We work out our salvation with fingers and toes and other bodily members, and all will be raised to life. It is not just a matter of thoughts and intentions! The whole body is baptised into Christ and is the instrument of our salvation. The body will be changed, and St Paul tells us that it is stupid to ask what sort of body we will have in the resurrection, but I shall be raised as a whole person.\*

*Today's Gospel: St Luke 24:35-48*

*\*Universalis, HW*

### Elements of the Mass: Liturgical colours – white

White is the colour of heaven. Liturgically, it is used to celebrate feasts of the Lord; Christmas and Easter, the great seasons of the Lord; and the saints. Not that you will always see white in church, because if something more splendid, such as gold, is available, that can and should be used instead. We are, after all, celebrating.

In the earliest centuries all vestments were white – the white of baptismal purity and of the robes worn by the armies of the redeemed in the Apocalypse, washed white in the blood of the Lamb. As the Church grew secure enough to be able to plan her liturgy, she began to use colour so that our sense of sight could deepen our experience of the mysteries of salvation, just as incense recruits our sense of smell and music that of hearing.

Over the centuries various schemes of colour for feasts and seasons were worked out, and it is only as late as the 19th century that they were harmonized into their present form.