

FATHER MARK SCHULTE
HOMILY
THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER (A)
APRIL 19, 2026

“Resurrection Experience”

Brothers and Sisters, in the Gospel we hear how in those immediate days following the resurrection Jesus appeared to a number of His disciples as a confirmation that He was indeed risen. Each of these persons experienced the Resurrected Jesus in their own unique way and each adds to our collective understanding of the Resurrection.

Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene out of whom several demons were driven. Initially, Jesus hid His identity from Mary. She perceived Jesus to be the gardener at the tomb. This perception harkens back to Adam, the first gardener of whom God gave the command to tend the garden (Gen 2:15 – 17) (CCC 378). Thus, Adam was the first gardener but he failed at his task. We refer to it as the fall (1Cor 15:20-22) (CCC 655). Jesus becomes the new Adam, the new and eternal gardener who will fulfill His Father’s will in every way (*). It was only when Jesus called Mary by name, “Mary”, that she recognized the resurrected Jesus. To be called by name is a significant aspect of our individual salvation with many implications (Is 43:1-7) (Jn 10:3-5) (CCC 2156-2159). Jesus will appear to the Apostles as a group in the upper room. They know that it is Jesus because He entered the room even though the doors were locked, a supernatural ability. Later Peter, John and some of the other Apostles would recognize Jesus as the stranger on the shore who would instruct them how to catch a miraculous super abundance of fish (Jn 21:4-8).

Last Sunday we heard how Thomas recognized the resurrected Christ by touching and examining His wounds, thus, giving Thomas the proof that he needed to accept that Jesus had truly risen.

And then in today’s Gospel Jesus appears to the two disciples’ as they walked along their way to the town of Emmaus (Lk 24:13-15). They would finally recognize the resurrected Jesus as He gave a Blessing, broke the bread, and ate supper with them. Of course, this action harkens back to the Last Supper Passover meal when Jesus broke the bread and gave it to His Apostles thus establishing the groundwork for the first Mass. For us this is perhaps the most pertinent example of the revelation of the resurrected Jesus because it is an action that we all recognize and experience in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass called the fractioning rite.

Jesus is present to His people at all times especially when they pray together, for Jesus said, “wherever two or three are gathered in my name, I am there” (Mt 18:20). The most significant prayer of the Church is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. When we come together and experience the breaking of the bread at the hands of an ordained priest, we know that the resurrected Jesus is present to us in a most privileged way. He is present to us in the priest who acts in the person of Christ in *Persona Christi*. He

is present to us in our communal prayer. But He is especially present to us in the consecrated bread and wine, the Holy Eucharist, now become the Body and Blood of the resurrected Jesus Christ. Like those two men who ate with Jesus at Emmaus, the veil is lifted from our eyes and through faith we receive the resurrected Lord in Holy Communion. And like those men our hearts, through faith, are burning within us, because Jesus is living within us now. The presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is so real that it could be said that those who purposely keep themselves away from the Holy Eucharist are separating themselves from the resurrected Jesus.

An exorcist has said that the reality of Jesus' resurrection can be experienced in every exorcism. It is through the power of the resurrected Jesus that the exorcist can cast out demons. The power of the instruments used in an exorcism such as holy water, crucifix, the priest's stole, the rosary, and the special prayers used in an exorcism all receive their power through the resurrected Jesus. He said the mere reading of the account of the resurrection from sacred scripture makes the demons howl in pain (**).

Peter and the other Apostles will go on to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus in their preaching (1Pt 1: 17-21). When you and I contemplate the resurrection of Jesus we often take many things for granted, but we are no different than Jesus' own disciples. How would we react if Jesus were to appear to us? Jesus gave this supremely unique opportunity to only a few people, and scripture has recorded some of them for our benefit (Acts 10: 40-42). In each case the experience was not what that individual disciple expected. Believe in the resurrected Lord, Jesus Christ and then share in the grace that He gives only to those who believe (CCC 991).

- (*) -- Jesus is the fulfillment of both shepherd (Abel) and gardener (Cain).
- Cain was a gardener that offered an unacceptable sacrifice (Gen 4:1-16).
- Jesus is the new gardener that offers the true sacrifice, whose blood speaks more eloquently than Abel's (Heb 12:24).

(**) Msgr. Stephen Rossetti, Exorcist diary #391

CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church