

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

YEAR C

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Lord God,
through your Son, Jesus,
you call upon us to love
and care for all people.
Make us able to see those
who need us most
and give us the courage
to overcome all difficulties.
We ask you this
through Christ our Lord.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The focus of the readings is the mission of the Church. In the first reading, the apostles are persecuted for preaching about Jesus and they respond by preaching even to their persecutors.

The Gospel tells us that at the word of Jesus the disciples caught so many fish they could hardly bring them in. All of this is in the context of the Church (the boat). We see in this reading references to the Eucharist: the bread which they shared and the mission to Peter to "feed my sheep."

FIRST READING: Acts 5:27b-32, 40b-41

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

The high priest and the other leaders had a meeting to decide what to do with the apostles, because they were teaching the people about Jesus.

The soldiers brought the apostles in and made them stand in front of the leaders. The high priest said to the apostles,

"We told you not to teach anyone about Jesus. But you have told everyone in Jerusalem about him. And now you are trying to say that we are the ones who killed him and that we are guilty."

Peter and the apostles answered,

"We must obey God, not you. You killed Jesus by hanging him on a cross, but our God raised him from the dead and made him our Savior and Leader. Jesus is the one who forgives all those who change their hearts and lives. We have seen these things, and we know they are true."

The high priest and the leaders were very angry when they heard this. They beat the apostles and sent them away telling them again that they must stop teaching about Jesus. The apostles left and were happy because they had to suffer for being faithful to Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Psalm 30

RESPONSE:

O God, you have given me life, you have given me life in you. O life in you.

VERSE:

I called to you to save me. You changed my sadness to dancing.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

"Do you love me?" Jesus said, Alleluia!
"Feed my lambs and feed my sheep." Alleluia!

GOSPEL: John 21:3-19

A reading from the Gospel of John.

One day, Peter said to the other disciples, "I'm going fishing."

They said, "We'll come with you."

So they went. They got into their boat and they fished all night long, but they didn't catch anything.

Early the next morning, as the sun was rising, Jesus was standing on the beach, but the disciples didn't know that it was Jesus. He called to them,

"Did you catch any fish?"

"No," they answered.

Then Jesus said,

"Put your net down into the water on the right side of the boat and you will catch some."

So they did what he said, and they caught so many fish they could not pull the net back into the boat.

One of the disciples said to the others,

"It's the Lord!"

They were not too far from shore, only about a hundred yards. When they got to the beach, they saw a charcoal fire with some fish on it and some bread.

Jesus said to them,

"Bring some of the fish you've just caught."

So Peter went back to the boat to bring the fish.

Then Jesus said to them,

"Come and have breakfast."

None of them asked Jesus, "Who are you?"

because now they knew he was the Lord.

Jesus took the bread and gave it to them.

He also gave them the fish to eat.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Peter,

"Peter, do you love me more than the others do?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Jesus asked Peter again, "Peter, do you love me?"

He said, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

A third time Jesus asked Peter, "Peter, do you love me?"

Peter was sad that Jesus asked him this question a third time. He said,

"Lord, you know everything! You know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

Then Jesus said to Peter, "Follow me."

Then Jesus said to Peter, "Follow me."

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Ask the children to recall the Gospel story. Remind them that most of the apostles were fishermen and that they were doing their work. Help them recall the story with questions such as:

- Who was there?
- How long did they fish?
- Did they catch anything?
- Who called to them?
- What did he say to them?
- Then what happened?
- What did they find on the beach?
- What did Jesus ask Peter?
- What did he tell Peter to do?

Help the children reflect on the meaning of those words "feed my sheep." Help them see that it is the ministry of the Church (us) to bring people in and to "feed" them. We do this especially in the Eucharist and the Word.

You may wish to end by inviting the children to sing the Gospel Acclamation as a response to short prayers such as:

Jesus, you are our Good Shepherd.
(Gospel Acclamation)

Jesus, you are always there to protect us.
(Gospel Acclamation)

Jesus, you bring us to live with you forever.
(Gospel Acclamation)