Question of the week: What does it mean to live in hope?

Introduction

In today's gospel the risen Christ appears to the disciples and offers them the gift of peace. Even amid doubts and questions, we experience the resurrection in our Sunday gathering around word and meal, and in our everyday lives. Even as the early Christians proclaimed the resurrection, we rejoice in the new birth and living hope we receive in baptism.

First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

After the Holy Spirit comes to the apostles on Pentecost, Peter preaches the gospel to the gathered crowd. He tells them that Jesus, who obediently went to his death according to God's plan, was raised from the dead by God. Finally, he appeals to scripture, quoting Psalm 16:8-11, to show that Jesus is the Messiah: though crucified, the risen Jesus is now enthroned.

Day 1: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Peter is speaking to the people at Pentecost. After the death and resurrection of Christ during a particularly unsettling and scattered time, the Holy Spirit comes to the apostles and unites them. How is the Holy Spirit at work in the world today uniting us, giving calm amidst chaos? How does the resurrection of Christ inform how we live in the world each day?

Day 2: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

In our passage from Acts, as he is speaking to the people, Peter quotes David in Psalm 16 when he says: "I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore, my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope (v.26 and 26). Based on your understanding of God, how might you live in hope today?

Gospel: John 20:19-31

The risen Jesus appears to his disciples, offering them a benediction, a commission, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. But one of their number is missing, and his unbelief prompts another visit from the Lord.

Day 3: John 20:19-31

After the death of Jesus, the disciples were locked away in a room out of fear. Jesus walked through the locked doors and brought words of peace. How does Jesus meet us today, meeting us as we hide sometimes behind walls of fear?

Day 3: John 20:19-31

In the second part of this passage, Jesus says: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe (v.29)." Those words, that phrase includes you and me. Blessed are you who have not seen and yet believe. Think prayerfully on these words. "Blessed are you who have not seen and yet believe." Blessed are you.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9

This epistle was written to encourage Christians experiencing hardships and suffering because of their faith in Christ. The letter opens by blessing God for the living hope we have through Christ's resurrection even amid difficult circumstances and surroundings.

Day 5: 1 Peter 1:3-9

This passage begins: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead… (v.3)." God has given each of us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. What does this living hope mean to you?

Day 6: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Verse 8 in this passage echoes the passage from John. "Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls."

What might it be like to live each day believing in Jesus and rejoicing with an indescribable and glorious joy for the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls? How do we give thanks to God for this gift?

Psalm: Psalm 16

In your presence there is fullness of joy. (Ps. 16:11)

Day 7: Psalm 16

The psalm begins: "Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge (v1)." What might it be like to begin each day or assignment or project or journey with these words? Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge? This is reminiscent of Psalm 46:1. God is my refuge and my strength. A very present help in times of trouble.