

We hear to understand. We see to believe. We touch to connect. There is the cliff notes of today's reading and this homily. Alleluia!

I was prepared to make CGS history with the shortest homily EVER but maybe reflecting on how this truly brings light and life to our lives is a bit more important than my ego to win such noble recognition of all of you. Or so I hope...

We hear to understand

Peter reminds the Jewish people of God's promise of a Messiah. He evokes their deep-rooted knowledge of scripture and of the prophets of what must, will and did happen to the Christ. He reminds them of their sin in their condemnation of Christ but also gives them an out, forgiveness, and a clean start. "Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away" (Acts 17:19). We hear, and we understand.

Then in 1 John, our second reading, we are reminded not to sin, but since we are born of sin, and it's deeply rooted in us, we know we will dash our feet along the stony path. We are told we will be okay. Keep the Word of God in your heart and you will persevere. Know that Christ, our great advocate, has suffered, died, and was raised again to be defender and wash away our failings with humanity's most horrific failing – its murder of God. Through Christ's most innocent and pure blood our sins are wash away. We hear, and we understand.

Luke further tells us that Christ opened the disciple's hearts and gave them knowledge of the Scriptures to go forth and teach all people, "... repentance, [and] for the forgiveness of sins, [to]...be preached in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:48). And when they did, just look at the results of their preaching today. We heard, and we understand.

We see, we believe.

"...You are witnesses of these things..." (Luke 24:48) Christ said to the disciples regarding prophesy and its fulfillment in his life, death, and resurrection for all of humankind's salvation. Those early believers saw, they believed, and they told the world. We see, we believe.

Jesus did not boast, nor did he appear in front of Pilot to rub it in his face that he won, nor did he track down the elders of the Sanhedrin to prove He was who He said He was. No, He appeared to those who loved and followed Him. They saw, so we can believe.

We learn of Jesus appearing to the disciples and they were terrified not knowing what he was. A ghost? But then they watch him cook food for them and they watch him eat some fish and they realize, as our first witnesses to our Saviors glorious resurrection, that He truly has risen. They see, we believe.

We touch to connect.

For some it is still all too much to believe and the tactile nature of a touch is the only way to connect to Christ's resurrection. And that is what Jesus did, He invites them to, "...Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have" (Luke 24:39). The touch to connect.

I am willing to bet that there have been many times in your life that you had to hear of something, then see it, and even interact with it before you would fully agree it is so. Just like our early believers and Disciples of Christ did. I am also sure that you have been on the educational end of that learning process and felt some frustration as you tried to prove your point to a doubting person or group. Much like you may experience similar emotions when reading these passages today. "Enough already, accept it and realize your hard headedness and let's get on with it!" But it is exactly through these experiences, witnessing's and physical interactions that the Word became flesh and was given to the world. Those few believed, received the Holy Spirit as a result, and brought salvation to all. Not the chosen people, not just those that followed Christ, but ALL people. Alleluia!

And when we believe we can then begin to deepen our relationship with God. We can turn away from sin, turn to God with a full and repentant heart, and receive our Creator's full measure of forgiveness, love, and salvation of our souls.

It is the best of news in a world, then and now, that is filled with anything but good news. But be strong my loved ones and have heart. I was reminded the other day of the words of Mahatma Gandhi, Father of Independent India, "When I despair I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but, in the end, they always fall." And to add to that, what is right, what is our faith, always prevails.

We hear God's word today and we see it lived out in each other. Use this to connect to God in ways that are physical (your acts) and spiritual (your inner faith and love of God). Let God and let go as you do this. Don't get caught up in the how but experience the do.

Fr. Greg Freidman, a Franciscan Monk, talked of how, while working on a mission at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, he was annoyed at people taking videos and photos of the tomb. He was reminded later by the Costus (leader of the monks there) that they are connecting in their own way to the fact that Christ is not in the tomb but with us. I feel it's important to share this so that we can all realize that our paths are our own and we should always look to find those special ways we can connect with the Word and live it out in our daily lives. Sometimes it will follow traditions and the actions of others and sometimes not. The point is the Word is out there, Christ is out there, and

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Year B – 3rd Sunday of Easter Luke 24:35-48
----Father Mike Cadotte----

He is waiting for you amongst all the noise and division the evil ones throws up in this world to block you from it.

“So YES! Jesus is alive and walks among us. Let us open our eyes and see him: let us open our ears and hear him: let us open our hearts to his Commandments to love everyone as we love ourselves and discover him in the poor, the marginalized, the captives, those with illness. That will bring us to loving God above all things. May it be so! Remember always: He is Alive” (Carol & Dennis Keller)!

AMEN