

February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Scripture:

Psalm 147:1-11

John 21:1-14

“Jesus...post resurrection.”

Our gospel passage today begins with --- “Afterward Jesus appeared again to His disciples, by the Sea of Galilee.” ---- and ----- “It happened this way...”

“Jesus appeared again to His disciples” --- and ----- “it happened this way.”

Simple --- basic --- straightforward --- no fanfare --- no bells --- no whistles  
--- Jesus appeared --- and it happened this way.

This is the way of Christ --- post resurrection ----- simple --- straightforward  
--- no bells --- no whistles ---- no miraculous feats ----- or dramatic events.

We have very few post resurrection appearances of Christ --- but in the few we do have ----- we find Jesus doing the very familiar ---- the down to earth  
--- most mundane of everyday tasks.

There are no healings --- nor miracles --- no teaching or preaching --- no parables --- we have very little to go on and what we do have are very simple ---- everyday appearances.

If we think about it for a minute --- it’s truly remarkable --- just how little we know about the days that Jesus walked the earth after His resurrection.

In Matthew we have 2 quick little appearances.

The first as the women hurry away from the tomb ---- and then the second when Jesus meets His disciples in Galilee and gives them what we now know as the great commission.

In Mark ---- at least if you accept the shorter version of the gospel and not the last few extra verses----- there is really only the announcement that Jesus has risen ----- and no actual post resurrection appearance.

In Luke we have a bit more --- there's the road to Emmaus and then there is Jesus appearing before His gathered disciples.

And then in John we have the most extensive collection of accounts of Christ post resurrection.

And even then we only have 2 chapters --- with Jesus appearing before Mary Magdalene --- His disciples minus Thomas ----- His disciples including Thomas ---- and then on the shore by the fire preparing breakfast --- our passage for today.

The truth is there really isn't much at all in our scriptures of Jesus post resurrection.

And what there is ---- is quite quotidian --- ordinary --- mundane --- everyday kind of stuff.

In our passage today Jesus simply shares a meal with His disciples --- and this is on par with all the other post resurrection events.

There aren't any big miracles ---- memorable or miraculous events post resurrection --- except maybe when Jesus is whisked away --- His ascension.

It's quiet --- off to the side --- intimate togetherness after the resurrection.

During His ministry Jesus feeds 5,000 people plus on the hillside ----- with a few fish --- 2 --- and a couple --- 5 loaves of bread.

Today with His disciples --- it's not 5,000 people fed ---- instead it's only 7.

Once again it's fish and bread --- but post resurrection it's only 7 people not 5 or 6 or 7,000.

Big miraculous feeding pre-resurrection --- large crowds --- little food ---- huge miracle.

Post-resurrection it's a small crowd --- actually no crowd ---- just 7 people.

And this time there are plenty of fish --- 153 according to the gospel today.

But there is no big dramatic act today --- instead it's just a simple --- intimate ---- ordinary --- gathering of friends on the beach for breakfast by the fire.

Growing up ----- Jesus led a very inconspicuous life in Galilee with Mary --- and Joseph and their neighbours.

Before the miracle at Cana ---- His first of many ----- before meeting John the Baptist ----- Jesus led a quiet --- off to the side ---- inconspicuous --- ordinary life.

Before His public ministry we know very little about His life.

Before turning water into wine in Cana ---- Jesus had done nothing extraordinary --- at least as far as we know --- there are no accounts of note prior to the wedding at Cana --- as John rightly notes it --- the wedding at Cana ---- “was the first of the signs through which He revealed His glory.”

He had lived a simply life of family ---- community --- prayer ---- and work ----- sharing with neighbours ----- living close to the poor and the weak ----- and going to worship.

His was a very human and mundane life ----- rooted in faith --- community - --- and in loving relationships.

And now ----- it seems--- that after the resurrection Jesus returns to that simple life of intimate togetherness ----- breakfast on the beach by the fire with those near and dear to Him.

Gone are the miracles post-resurrection.

And instead it's back to Galilee --- back to Galilee where He spent much of His time growing up.

As Matthew 2 verse 23 says --- “He followed his parents to Nazareth in Galilee where He grew up.”

Post-resurrection ---- it's back to Galilee where He grew up.

And back to Galilee signals more than just geography ----- back to Galilee is also about back to the inconspicuous and everyday ---- ordinariness of life.

Community ---- intimate relationship ----- togetherness.

Post-resurrection Christ comes to us in our ordinary lives --- every day moments ----- breakfast on the beach.

Post-resurrection Jesus says to Mary --- in Matthew's gospel --- "Tell them to meet me in Galilee."

"Tell them to meet me in Galilee."

It's to Galilee --- back home ----- in the quietness of familiarity and family and community --- that Jesus heads.

Jesus drives home the point that He meets us in the ordinariness of our lives --- on the beach --- at the fireside --- over breakfast --- biscuits and fish on the shore.

In the quietness of our hearts ---- gathered around the dinner table ---- on the couch as we read our devotions ----- in the car on the way to Tim Horton's -- ---- doing the laundry ---- taking out the garbage --- washing up the pots and pans ---- loading the dishwasher.

You don't need to climb a mountain to spend time with our resurrected Lord.

Go fishing ----- go to work ---- take a walk with a trusted friend ----- and He'll meet you on the shore --- or when you arrive home.

Jean Vanier rightly notes --- in commenting on this passage from John's gospel today that ----- "The evangelist --- John --- wants us to remember that Jesus meets us wherever we are."

"The evangelist wants us to remember that Jesus meets us wherever we are."

It's true ----- "Jesus meets us wherever we are."

That's a huge part of what today --- Communion ---- is all about ---- Jesus meeting us right where we are today.

Confused.

Overjoyed.

Angry.

Frustrated.

Delighted.

Uncertain.

Tired.

Full of anticipation.

Eager.

Despondent.

You name it.

Wherever it is that we are on our faith journey.

Wherever it is that we are at this moment ----- Jesus meets us here.

We don't have to do extraordinary things in order for Jesus to come to us.

The disciples --- the fishermen ---- were --- well fishing --- and Jesus comes to them ----- and Jesus meets them --- and Jesus feeds them.

Jesus comes to us in the everyday.

And notice Jesus comes to them when they are together --- as a community.

On a boat together --- in a room together ---- see John 20 just before our passage this morning they are gathered together when he comes to them ----- they are together ---- just as we are now together ---- in community.

They come together ---- and Jesus comes among them.

Jesus comes to us wherever we are ----- and He especially comes when we are gathered together in community.

Jesus could have appeared to His disciples in many other ways and times --- one by one --- when they were alone.

He could have come before them and done many more miraculous things --- - big --- huge dramatic ----- awe inspiring things.

Jesus could have preached huge long intricate detailed sermons --- long lectures and times of teaching --- more parables perhaps even.

Jesus could have gone back and appeared to those who killed Him and waved His finger in their faces --- and said --- “Ha --- I told you so --- but you didn’t believe me --- what do you think of me now?”

But He didn’t.

He gathered with His disciples --- He sat --- and He ate --- and He talked with them and He loved them --- and He sent them out to feed the other believers.

Christ doesn’t leave us wondering what we should be doing.

Jesus doesn’t leave us asking questions --- “What should we do? --- How are we supposed to be acting? ----- What’s next?”

God loves us.

God shows us by example in Christ ---- in John’s gospel today what we are supposed to be doing.

Gathering in Christ’s name ---- feeding each other --- talking with each other ---- loving each other --- even the one’s who weren’t ----- and aren’t ----- all that nice to us.

Peter denies Christ --- remember 3 times Peter is asked if he is a follower of Christ and all 3 times he denies it.

Read just past our passage today --- it is Peter ---- the one who denied Christ --- reminiscent of David being reinstated in the Old Testament ----- it is Peter that Jesus commissions to be His next leader --- the new leader.

Jesus doesn't hold a grudge --- He doesn't even wait for Peter to seek forgiveness ----- He simply forgives Peter and then commissions him to lead His people.

If you want to know just how loving and forgiving and compassionate and caring and providing God is.

If you want to know just how much God cares for us ---- read John's post resurrection accounts of Christ --- John 20 and 21 --- it's all there.

And it's all there in plain simple --- straightforward ---- everyday ---- quotidian fashion.

Jean Vanier is on to something when he says -----“The evangelist wants us to remember that Jesus meets us wherever we are.”

The post resurrection Christ has little to do with huge miracles and dramatic feats of power and might and awe.

The post resurrection Christ takes us back to the rural life --- the pastoral life --- the family gathered life --- the togetherness --- simple and humble life of His upbringing in Galilee.

The post resurrection Christ brings us back to a camp fire on the shore with biscuits and fish on the fire.

A simple meal together --- intimate ---- familiar ---- nourishment ---- fellowship --- no bells --- no whistles ----- just togetherness ---- companionship ---- fellowship --- authenticity ---- real life ----- every day life --- ordinary life --- simple life ----- loving relationships life.

The post resurrection Christ picks it up in the exact same place as He left it off pre crucifixion ---- with a meal.

Just before death --- He gathered in an upper room in Jerusalem --- took bread broke it ---- and said to His disciples --- take eat and do this in remembrance of me.

And now here He is post resurrection --- doing the exact same things ---- bread and fish on the fire --- together --- eating together again.

There is nothing more mundane than eating.

There is nothing more community building than eating.

And there is nothing more spiritual than eating.

Jesus comes to us in the most mundane of things and makes them something spiritual --- special ---- mysterious --- powerful ---- true and good.

If you want to meet the risen Christ you don't need to go to the Great Wall of China --- or the Pyramids ---- or the Grand Canyon ---- or wherever.

If you want to meet Jesus ----- go fishing --- with others ---- gather on the beach by a campfire with others.

If you want to meet Jesus fall at his feet --- before the throne of grace --- with other like minded people around to guide and help and nurture you as you journey.

If you want to meet Jesus come to His table ----- gather with others --- as we are about to do together ----- and He will show up --- He will meet you there.

He will show up eventually.

Maybe not just how and when and why you want Him to --- but He will meet you ---- He will not leave you feeling abandoned or lost --- or left out.

Remember the disciples are tired ---- they've been out all night fishing before Jesus arrives on the beach.

They are just about to give up and head for shore --- sometimes it's just as we are about to give up and quit ---- that Christ comes to us --- in fact often it is just as we are about to give up and quit that Christ comes to us.

Our extremity is often God's opportunity.

Post resurrection Christ is back at home in Galilee doing what He knows best ----- shore walking ----- caring for others ---- being together ----- eating talking --- warming by the fire --- calling us --- even those who denied Him -- like Peter ----- calling to us from far off and leading us in new directions.

If we want to know the beauty --- goodness and truth of God.

If we want to see and experience the depths of the saving love of Jesus Christ in action ----- we need look no further than John's gospel --- chapters 20 and 21 ---- for there we see the resurrected Christ alive and well doing what He does best.

Gathering people together ---- feeding them ---- sending them out in His name to feed others.

And so we give thanks to God ---- for the risen Christ.

Calling to us from a new shore ----- gathering us around Him ---- feeding us --- and sending us out in His name to do the same.

God is so good.

God is so beautiful.

He is the way --- the truth --- and the life.

Amen.