

Third Sunday of Easter – April 19, 2015

Getting older has the benefit of letting time and experience help us better understand some things that used to puzzle us. Today's Gospel is a case in point. Jesus appears; the disciples are terrified. Is this a ghost? Are they dreaming bad dreams? Jesus reassures them; he is the one who suffered. "See, touch me. The marks of shameful suffering are very real, not something you would dream up." Finally, Jesus asks an odd question: "Have you anything here to eat?" After all that's gone on with Jesus and with his disciples, this is the big question? Yes, oftentimes it is.

Jesus is as real in resurrection as he had been from birth to death. He was himself, now unbound, no longer held back by physical limits. He was still the man born of Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, and raised by God. That means that so affirmed Jesus that he put the infallible stamp of approval on his life, death, and message of hope. But how do we keep that hope alive?

Jesus tells us how by asking his disciples that seemingly odd question: "Have you anything here to eat?"

And then we remember: meals are just where Jesus did most of his teaching, where he formed relationships, where he healed and showed mercy, where he washed and kissed the feet of sinners. Sharing meals is what will keep the disciples' hopes alive – and ours, too.

We also remember that Jesus' last moments with his disciples before he died were spent sharing a meal – a meal he told them to continue "in memory of me." We call it the Last Supper. We continue with Jesus and with countless others the same meal service. We call it the Eucharist.

Well, it's about time for our Sunday meal that we call the Eucharist. The family is together. The table will be set. We are hungry in all the ways human beings can be hungry. And "have you anything here to eat?" doesn't seem like such an odd question after all.