



Third Sunday of Easter
14 April 2024

Ascension Lutheran Church
Pastor Edwin Aparicio

Cristo ha resucitado! Aleluya! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Grace and peace from our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen. In the church, we are still celebrating Easter. Today's gospel reminds me of my mom's first Easter in Waukesha. She had been here for about a week and she was excited to celebrate her first holiday with the family. As she was adjusting to the new climate here in Wisconsin, she felt her skin becoming very dry and painful. The more uncomfortable it became, the more face cream she applied. It didn't seem to matter.

By the time Easter morning arrived, she was too embarrassed about the appearance of her dry skin to even come to church. She asked me to take her to the doctor. I told her that I would take her first thing Monday morning, but in the meanwhile, let's have my wife look at her face. As soon as Sarah saw her face, she recognized skin that looked like the end of a severe sunburn.

My wife asked my mom "What have you been using to wash your face and what face cream are you using?" My mom showed her the new lotion that she had been rubbing into her face many, many times a day. Let me tell you, it was not face cream. It was a chemical peel that should only be applied once a week and then immediately washed away. My mom doesn't know how to read, so she couldn't recognize what the bottle said.

In today's reading, we hear how the disciples in the evening were gathering and talking about all the events that had occurred in the morning on the resurrection day. They were having a hard time believing the message about what had happened that morning. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Jesus ha resucitado! Aleluya!

Doubts about the resurrection were not only reflected in Thomas's behavior. There were other disciples who did not recognize the message they had received about the resurrection of our Lord. Among them we can mention the message of the women who went and saw the empty tomb. The message of Mary Magdalene when she shared that she had seen Jesus and not only that she had seen him but that she had also talked with him. The message of Peter and John who went to the tomb. And as we have heard in today's reading, the message of the experiences that the two disciples had on their way to Emmaus also did not convince them that Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Jesus ha resucitado! Aleluya!

It was very difficult for them to admit with faith what the witnesses had announced to them. And it is precisely at that moment while they were talking, the Lord appears among them saying, "Peace be with you." Jesus was not only bringing them peace. But he was also fulfilling the words that he had announced to them at the time when they were in Galilee.

In the Gospel of Matthew 17:22-23 Jesus says, "The Son of Man will be handed over to the powers of this world." "They will kill him, but on the third day he will rise again." Jesus revealed himself to all of them in their midst so that they could finally recognize that Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Jesus ha resucitado! Aleluya!



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And then Jesus continued saying to them, "Look at my hands and my feet. Touch me and see me." but even with the evidence they were having, they still did not recognize him. They did not recognize him until he opened their minds and they began to understand the scriptures about what he was saying.

God revealed himself in the person of Jesus. Jesus revealed himself to the disciples. Jesus revealed himself through the proclamation of his message in the first Christian communities. Christ has revealed himself to humanity throughout history. Christ is revealing himself and will continue to reveal himself through those who listen and follow his message because he is not dead. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Jesus ha resucitado! Aleluya!

You may wonder, well, how can I recognize Jesus in the world, in my country, in my community, in my church or in my life. Well, let me help you, Christ is present today and moves the hearts of all those teenagers, women and men from your church who carry out various community services in our city. Christ is present in each of those ministries that have a table out there at the ministry fair. Today you will have the opportunity to know and learn about all of the wonderful things that Jesus is doing through your church community.

And if that's not enough, let me continue helping you. Christ is present, when English-speaking people and Spanish-speaking people work together to prepare the alfombras for La Semana Santa (Holy Week). Christ is present when two communities with different languages agree to praise God in bilingual worship. Christ is present when two communities walk together hand-in-hand in this continuous journey on earth. Christ is present at the baptism of Serena and Stella, who will be baptized today. He will reveal Himself to both of them as they grow. Christ becomes present when we support each other. Christ is present in the bread and wine. Christ becomes present when we share his message of love, joy, peace, and above all, hope with our actions or with our words with others.

Brothers and sisters, all this and more is possible only because he lives, and not only because he lives, but most importantly, he lives in us. Jesus has revealed himself, he reveals himself, he will continue to reveal himself, and will continue to be recognized only through the work that he is already doing in us.

May the grace and peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with each of us. Amen.

He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Cristo ha resucitado Aleluya.