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## This Week's Readings



**First Reading: Acts 5: 27-32, 40-41.**

The Apostles bore witness to the Risen Christ at the cost of great suffering and humiliation.

**Second Reading: Revelation 5: 11-14.**

John sees a vision of the Lamb of God, the risen Christ sharing the glory and praises of God.

**Gospel: John 21: 1-19.**

The Apostles recognize the risen Lord and eat with him.

## Points for Reflection

1. The incident related in the **First Reading** from the Acts reveals that the Sadducees were livid with rage because the apostles had publicly disregarded their injunction to abstain from teaching in the name of Jesus. To the Sadducees, the apostles were not only heretics; they were also potential disturbers of peace. However, from the narrative of today's reading the apostles were men of courage and principle. Their ruling motto was that in all circumstances "obedience to God must come first."

Moreover, they were witnesses for Christ. They knew from personal experience that what they said was true and it was impossible to stop them from preaching because it is impossible to stop the truth. They refused to be silenced and were glad to suffer for the sake of Jesus.

2. The **Second Reading** reveals that all creation will one day recognize Jesus' sovereignty in heaven and on earth. The book of Revelation poetically describes the role Christ has played in the salvation of all. Christ is described as a 'Lamb' who was slain in sacrifice. However, he is the center of worship and adoration among angels and men. The 'thousands and the tens of thousands' are those faithful witnesses to the 'Lamb of God' who share in his glory. That is our final destiny.
3. The **Gospel** relates two episodes:
  - a) Jesus manifests himself to his disciples in the midst of their routine activity: fishing. However, their overnight fishing was unsuccessful. Following the invitation of a stranger, they cast their nets on the right side of the boat and got plenty of fish. Only then did they recognize Jesus. The miraculous catch of fish symbolizes the mission of the apostle: to be 'fishers of men.' The net

stands for the Church, where there is room for all men of all nations. There is no exclusiveness, no colour bar or selectiveness. The embrace of the Church is universal.

b) The **Gospel** recounts also the rehabilitation of Peter. Jesus asked Peter three times: "Do you love me more than these (the apostles and the disciples)?" The reply came quickly: "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus, in his gracious forgiveness, gave Peter the chance to wipe out the memory of the threefold denial by a threefold declaration of love. This declaration of love brought Peter a task and a cross:

- *The task:* Jesus instructs Peter to care for the lambs and the sheep, namely, the flock of the Church.
- *The cross:* Jesus foretells Peter that the day will come when "you will stretch out your hands and another will gird you and carry you where you will not wish to go."

In fact, Peter died the death of a martyr for Christ on the cross in Rome in 66 A.D.

Today, Jesus addresses each one of us with the same question he asked Peter: "Do you love me?" He is waiting for our answer.

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