

## FIRST READING – B 3 EASTER

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

At the temple gate, Peter addressed the people:  
“The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,  
the God of our fathers has glorified his servant Jesus,  
whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate,  
though he had decided to release him.  
But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One  
and asked to have a murderer given to you,  
and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead.  
To this we are witnesses.  
And now, brothers and sisters, I know that you acted in ignorance,  
as did also your rulers.  
In this way God fulfilled  
what he had foretold through all the prophets,  
that his Messiah would suffer.  
Repent therefore, and turn to God  
so that your sins may be wiped out.”

Pause for **THREE** seconds  
then look up at the people  
and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

*Thanks be to God.*

## SECOND READING – B 3 EASTER

A reading from the first letter of Saint John.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

My little children,  
I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.  
But if anyone does sin,  
we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;  
and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins,  
and not for ours only  
but also for the sins of the whole world.  
Now by this we may be sure that we know him,  
if we obey his commandments.  
Whoever says, “I have come to know him,”  
but does not obey his commandments, is a liar,  
and in such a person the truth does not exist;  
but whoever obeys his word,  
truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection.  
By this we may be sure that we are in him.

Pause for **THREE** seconds  
then look up at the people  
and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

*Thanks be to God.*

## GOSPEL READING – B 3 EASTER

The Lord be with you.

*And with your spirit.*

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

*Glory to you, O Lord*

The two disciples told the eleven and their companions  
what had happened on the road to Emmaus,  
and how Jesus had been made known to them  
in the breaking of the bread.

While they were talking about this,  
Jesus himself stood among them and said to them,  
“Peace be with you.”

They were startled and terrified,  
and thought that they were seeing a ghost.

He said to them,  
“Why are you frightened,  
and why do doubts arise in your hearts?  
Look at my hands and my feet;

see that it is I myself.  
Touch me and see;  
for a ghost does not have flesh and bones  
as you see that I have.”

And when he had said this,  
he showed them his hands and his feet.  
While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering,  
he said to them,

“Have you anything here to eat?”  
They gave him a piece of broiled fish,  
and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them,  
“These are my words that I spoke to you  
while I was still with you –  
that everything written about me in the law of Moses,  
the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.”

Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures,  
and he said to them,

“Thus it is written, that the Christ is to suffer  
and to rise from the dead on the third day,  
and that repentance and forgiveness of sins  
is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations,  
beginning from Jerusalem.

You are witnesses of these things.”



The GOSPEL of the LORD.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

## SCRIPTURES IN DEPTH

### **Reading I: Acts 3:13-15, 17-19**

Few scholars today would defend the speeches in Acts as representing what Peter or others said on any given occasion. As they stand, these speeches are the compositions of the author of Luke-Acts and represent his theology. At the same time, however, they frequently enshrine very early Christological materials.

Here, for instance, Jesus is called by the very early title “the Holy and Righteous One,” which describes him in his earthly life as the righteous servant of YHWH. The title “Author of life” is probably very ancient.

The Greek word for “author” is *archegos*, “captain” or “leader,” and portrays Jesus as the new Moses. As the first Moses led God’s people into the land of Canaan, so the new Moses leads the faithful into life, the kingdom of God, the new Canaan.

Note, too, the primitive picture of the death and resurrection as humanity’s *no* and God’s *yes* (see the comments on last Sunday’s responsorial psalm).

On the other hand, the second paragraph introduces some typically Lucan themes: the Christ must suffer as the Scriptures foretell (see the gospel).

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### **Responsorial Psalm: 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9**

This psalm is an individual lament in which a pious Israelite calls out for deliverance and receives an answer in the form of vindication from his/her enemies. Thus vindicated, the plaintiff can lie down and sleep peacefully.

Since Christ is “the Holy and Righteous One,” this psalm can be applied to his death and resurrection. He was in distress and called upon the Lord, who raised him from the dead and vindicated him.

His work thus accomplished, he can sit down at the right hand of God.

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### **Reading II: 1 John 2:1-5a**

To apply to Christ the words “I will lie down and sleep” (responsorial psalm) does not imply that he is inactive. He is our “advocate” (“paraclete,” literally “helper”) in heaven. Sin still occurs in the Christian life (when 1 John was written, the Gnostics were perfectionists who believed that proper Christians were sinless), but the exalted Christ still pleads our cause with the Father.

He is the “expiation” for our sins—a better word than “propitiation,” which suggests that God was an angry Deity who required appeasing. Rather, the exalted Christ acts as our advocate before God by applying the benefits of his death to our sins, cleansing and removing them so that we can be restored to the right relationship with God.

The Gnostics, with their slogan “we know him,” not only maintained that they no longer sinned and therefore required no continuing work of Christ to expiate their sins, but they also believed that they

were dispensed from the need for moral effort.

However, the true test of our “knowing God”—that is, of religious experience—is that we keep his commandments.

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### **Gospel: Luke 24:35-48**

This gospel represents a departure from the norm in series B, which is to follow a course of readings from Mark, supplemented by John during Lent and the Easter season. On the third Sunday of Easter in series A, the Emmaus story was read, and today’s selection completes the Lucan appearance stories with the account of the appearance to the disciples in the upper room. It is the counterpart of [John 20:19-23](#), which we read last week. The location—in the upper room in Jerusalem—is the same; the risen Lord’s greeting is identical. The emphasis on the physical is similar.

In John this emphasis on the physical takes the form of the invitation to touch the body of the risen One, while in Luke it takes the form of a demonstration by eating a piece of broiled fish. This detail is doubly interesting. The presence of fish suggests an original Galilean setting for this appearance story, while the meal context suggests the association of the original resurrection appearances with the Eucharist.

These primitive elements were developed (probably by the pre-Lucan tradition) for apologetic purposes similar to those which were at work in John. Luke simply takes these elements over from his tradition.

His real interest is to be found in the final paragraph—the instruction of the risen Lord to his disciples. This is again rooted in earliest tradition and has parallels in John and Matthew, for it includes the command to mission (forgiveness of sins also includes the notion of baptism; cf. [Matthew 28:19](#)).

But in Luke there is a unique emphasis on the scriptures: “‘Everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and said to them, ‘Thus it is written . . . .’”

The same themes, as we have seen, recur in the final paragraph of the reading from Acts. Clearly we have here a theological concern of Luke.

*Reginald H. Fuller*