

2026-05-10: 4th Sunday - Reading the Scripture

Introduction

Christ is Risen!

Good morning, dear beloved, blessed Holy 50 Days as we continue to celebrate the Glorious Resurrection of the Lord.

During these Holy 50 Days, the Church arranges for most of the Liturgy Gospel readings to be from the Gospel of John - even on the weekdays and Saturdays. And on Sundays, the Church takes us on a journey.

1. 1st Sunday: Thomas Sunday, the Lord confirms our faith
2. 2nd Sunday: He is the Bread of Life; He gives us His Body to eat and His Blood to drink for salvation and remission of sins.
3. 3rd Sunday: Samaritan Woman, He gives us the Living Water which is the Holy Spirit
4. 4th Sunday: He is the Light of the World
5. 5th Sunday: He is the Way the Truth and the Life
6. 6th Sunday: He has overcome the world, so we are joyful
7. 7th Sunday: He sends us His Spirit to dwell in us, the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth

Background

Today the Church is speaking to us about Christ, the Light of the World

And since He is the Light of the World, so He came to enlighten our minds, our hearts and our understandings (1st Hour).

Light:

- Overcomes darkness and confusion
- Wisdom - when you say someone is "enlightened" what does that mean? That they have some knowledge, some wisdom
- Shows the right path

And the light is the Word of God.

"Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)

The Word of God:

- Comforts me when I abide in it
- Is a weapon, sharper than a two-edged sword; a weapon used in our warfare against the devil
- Gives us the heavenly mind
- Gives me the sound doctrine
- Gives me enlightenment
- Gives me guidance
- Teaches me the fear of God

Unfortunately, we don't give the Word of God its due. We:

- Read it quickly
- Read it without understanding
- Read it just as a routine

If I ask any group of youth to recite the verses they know, or to list the minor prophets, or tell me the theme of one of the books, or to give me the map of the Gospels... very rare. When we have a Bible Study, we have low attendance. When we hear confessions - most of the time there is a struggle with reading the Scripture. And unfortunately, because we don't know the Scripture, so many fall away from God and from the Church in their youth...

St Augustine, before he was "saint" Augustine, lived a life of confusion and sin. He was with the wrong crowds, he was confused by the various teachings, and he lived in sin. And his mother, St Monica would pray for him with tears, she went multiple times and talked to the bishop, St Ambrose, and put her tears at his feet. What changed him in the end? What caused him to go back to the Lord? He opened the Scripture and he read two verses from Romans 13. And he felt that his heart was flooded with light. All it took was one little flame to give light in the darkness. And he was baptized and became a Christian and became the saint that we know and we learn from.

This is the importance of the Word of God in our life, and this is the light that the Word of God gives us.

So how do we read the Scripture?

How to Read the Scripture

- Prayer before reading (short prayer)
 - See examples of Litany of the Gospel, Inaudible Prayers before the readings
- Reverence while reading
 - Wearing an esharb
 - Sitting up straight
 - Holding the Bible
- Consistency
 - Imagine a flashlight turning on for a second and then waiting two weeks to turn it on again - you will stumble for two weeks
 - Imagine a flashlight that's always on
 - Consistency has the power to transform

- Memorize
 - St Mary did this!
- Spend time to understand

Techniques for Understanding the Scripture

1. Read the Chapter
2. If there is a verse you don't understand, read a commentary on it (Coptic Commentary app, Anba Youssef, Fr Daoud, Fr Antonios Fikry, Fr Tadros)
3. Ask the Six Questions
4. Write a Contemplation
 - Turn the reading into a prayer
5. Take a verse to memorize

Six Questions

1. Is there a commandment for me?
 - Something that I need to start doing or I need to increase in it
 - "Love your enemies"
 - "Bless those who curse you"
 - "Pray for those who spitefully use you"
2. Is there a sin to repent?
 - Something I need to STOP doing
3. Is there a promise?
 - "Do not fear little flock for it is Your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"
 - "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age"
 - These promises give me hope - in a time when the devil attacks me with despair
4. Is there a benefit for me?
 - "No longer do I call you servants but friends, for a servant does not know the will of his master"
5. What qualities (or names) of God do I find in this passage?
 1. Good, Long-suffering, Merciful, Slow to Anger, Fair, etc.
 2. Father, Good Shepherd, Teacher, My God, My Light, My salvation, My joy, My glory, etc.
 3. So when the devil comes and attacks me and makes me think something evil about God... someone might say "God lets bad things to happen" - "God does not love me" - "God is not fair" - I will recall those stories and verses and passages
6. Is there a character I can learn from in this passage?
 1. St Mary, King David, Ruth, Esther, St Paul, etc.
 2. Where can I put myself in this story?
 3. And it doesn't have to be on of the saints - it could be someone like King Saul. His end was not good, but there is much that we can learn from him. Or Judas... his end was not good, but we can learn from him what not to do and not to despair.
 4. Or it could even just be someone random and unnamed in the Scripture! When I read the feeding of the multitude, maybe I put myself as one of the 5000... if I was one of the 5000 and the disciples came and tried to put me in a group of 50, what would I have done? I would have complied? Or I would have said no I want to be in

this other group? And then they start to distribute 5 loaves and 2 fish... and I see how many people there are. What would I have done? Waited patiently, having faith? Or I would have ran to the front to get some food before it runs out? And when the disciples go and pick a leader for each group of 50 and I don't get picked, I go and complain and say it's not fair? Where am I in this story? What would I have done in this story?

In every passage, you will be able to answer at least a few of these questions - not all six, but at least two or three of them.

Conclusion

May the Lord grant us

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