

**April 19, 2020 | Second Sunday of Easter (A)**

[ACTS 2:42-47](#)

[PS 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24](#)

[1 PT 1:3-9](#)

[JN 20:19-31](#)

*By Dianne Bergant*

The first readings for the Sundays after Easter are all taken from the Acts of the Apostles. While each reading is unique in itself and contains profound resurrection theology, they are all the same in one important way. They provide an example of the manner of living expected of those who profess faith in the resurrection of Jesus. This is very clear in the Acts reading for today. The very first verse outlines the contours of that life: “They devoted themselves... to the teaching of the apostles...to communal life...to the breaking of the bread.” The most challenging of these might well be the second - communal life.

Why do we find it so difficult to commit ourselves to certain aspects of communal life? Today’s reading describes a very significant aspect of such a life - they had all things in common. This is not a plea for socialism. In the recent past, we have had enough bickering over this issue. It is a plea for recognizing the right people have to be given, as today’s reading states: “according to each one’s need.” Nor is this an attack on capitalism. It is a plea to return to an important aspect of family values.

We all have come from a family. It is there that we learned to contribute what we can and receive what we need. No one is required to produce a ticket to sit down to a family meal. No one must prove that they have earned enough money to warrant needed health care – another issue over which there has been contentious bickering. Without taking sides on these very important issues, one has to wonder - Why has it taken a pandemic for us to realize that we are indeed in this —life, not simply health emergency – together? Examples of this communal reality are seen in the courage and commitment of first responders, health care personnel, and food suppliers, to name but a few people who have stepped forward to serve others “according to each one’s need.” Civic minded individuals and groups are offering food and other essentials to perfect strangers because there is a need, because it is the thing to do. Communal life recognizes that we are first all members of the family; we are all vulnerable and in need of each other; we are all in this together.

When the fury of this disease has passed, will we remember who we were during it? Will we continue to see that the needs of others are met? Will we be willing to curb some of our behavior so that others will be able to live meaningful lives? Will the best in us that has surfaced during this crisis transform our sense of social responsibility? Will the message that we are not alone but are in it together be broadcasted again and again by TV and sports celebrities be evidenced in the way we interact with each other? Or will this simply be a story that many of us will tell and that will inspire gripping movies in the future?

Are we really an Easter people? Do we really care for or even care about the needy in our midst? No political party seems to have the answers to such questions. However, if we really are the people we continue to tout that we are, then we certainly can work together in search of answers. Then, along with the early Christians, we will be able to eat our meals with exultation and sincerity of heart.”

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