

## Be Still

### *Peter—In the light of a new dawn*

#### Prayer

Lord Jesus, after you had risen, you stood at the water's edge

as the sun was rising over the Sea of Galilee.

You asked your disciples about their fishing,

but they were slow to recognise you.

Lead us to recognise that you are present, standing beside us. Amen.

#### Reading (part one)—*Damian Lundy, FSC*

Chapter 21 of John's Gospel...is a beautifully told story of a meeting between the risen Jesus and Simon Peter on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. To his six companions, Peter has announced: *"I'm going fishing."* It has been suggested that these words point to a return to the way life was before Jesus disturbed it. Peter is an ex-disciple, a failure, but he is a born leader, and the others say: *"We'll come with you."* As in Luke 5, Peter is not a good fisherman, and catches nothing all night until Jesus stands at the water's edge *'when it was already light'*.

At the Stranger's word, the fishermen catch a hundred and fifty-three big fish—seen by many commentators as a symbol of the catholicity of the Church: It is for everyone. Then—a delightful touch—the Lord invites the disciples to *"come and have breakfast"*. The meal is described in Eucharistic terms: *'Jesus took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish.'*

#### Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the sun that always rises, but never sets.

You are the source of all life, creating and sustaining every living thing.

You are the source of all food, material and spiritual,

nourishing us in both body and soul.

You are the light that dispels the clouds of error and doubt,

and goes before me every hour of the day,

guiding my thoughts and my actions.

May I walk in your light, be nourished by your food,

be sustained by your mercy, and be warmed by your love. Amen.

#### Reading (part two)—*Damian Lundy, FSC*

Eucharist is followed by reconciliation. The first thing Peter saw as he came ashore was *'some bread there and a charcoal fire with some fish cooking on it'*. The charcoal fire could not have failed to remind him of his threefold denial of Jesus, since this had taken place outside the door of the high priest's palace where *'the servants and guards had lit a charcoal fire and were warming themselves; so Peter stood there too, warming himself with the others'* (John 18:18). It was there that, when asked three times if he were not one of Jesus' disciples, he denied it three times before the cock crew...

A new start is needed and, after breakfast, Jesus asks Simon Peter, *"Do you love me?"* It is an emotional question, asked three times, and it is therefore an opportunity to move beyond the threefold denial to a fresh start...

The fact that Jesus addresses his old follower as *'Simon, son of John'* each time, is also to be noted, for John tells us that the Lord's very first words to the man he was to choose to lead his community had been, *"You are Simon, son of John"...* Now we see Jesus taking Peter back to the start of their relationship, and giving him another chance, another call. Peter's vocation will involve a change of job, from fisherman to shepherd... Peter is asked to take care of Jesus' flock, not his own. And Jesus predicts the martyr's death... The Lord then renews Peter's call to discipleship by saying: *"Follow me"*.

#### Prayer—*Peter de Rosa*

Father, I praise you for the strength of Christ,

who can build his Church upon the rock of a weak man's faith.

I praise you for the generosity of Christ who chose as his chief shepherd someone who deserted him in his hour of need.

Father, help me to be humble when I fail, and in all I do to let Christ take my arm and lead me wherever he wills. Amen.

#### Reading—*Edward Farrell*

The questions of Jesus are an inexhaustible revelation of his dream. *"Who do you say that I am? Do you love me? What do you want me to do for you? Do you want to be healed? Do you believe me? Do you dream? Did I not assure you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"*

What did Jesus see in Peter, or James, or John or Mary Magdalene? What does Jesus see in any one of us? Over and over again, the Gospel says that Jesus knew what was in their hearts. We can be absolutely sure of but one thing: that he knows us. He knows us as we do not know ourselves.

What is even more important, he loves us as we cannot love ourselves, as we are worth being loved. Only Jesus has that power; he can read our depths and our heights. Jesus could look at Peter and say, *"you are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church"*. Incredible! Imagine Jesus saying to you, *"You are the one upon whom I will build my Church."* Unbelievable as it sounds, that is what he is saying; *"Upon your marriage, upon your love for one another, I will build my community"*.

Jesus could make wild statement about his followers, not because he was an unrealistic dreamer, but because he knows more than anyone else about the power of love. Only love creates vision; without love, there is no vision, only despair. His own heart is the power which releases in the world the tremendous reality that death no longer has any power over us.

No one knows more deeply than Jesus how much we are sinners, how much of us remains unredeemed. No one know more deeply the reality of sin, our own personal sin, because he absorbed all of our sin into himself, and overcame it. That is why he has the right to love us and to have his vision for each of us.

#### Prayer

May the Lord Jesus, risen from the dead, bless us now and always with the joy of the new life he promises. Amen.