

4/26/26 SALT CO

Via Lucis Station IX: Jesus Appears by the Sea of Tiberius

“Jesus said to them, ‘Come and have breakfast...”

John 21:4-14

Table Talk I

Share your name and the first thing that comes to you when you recall the smell of fresh baked bread.

Station IX: Jesus Appears by the Sea of Tiberius

Via Lucis began in a Catholic church in Italy in 1988. Also called the Way of Light VIA LUCIS follows the 14 Stations of the Resurrection during the 40 days of Jesus’ many appearances. This practice has quickly spread to many countries and now also to Evangelical groups and churches.

As with the fourteen Stations of the Cross we followed on Good Friday, each station of the resurrection is rooted in the witness from our bibles- Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the Book of Acts and I Corinthians.

All for a purpose. To help us re-member, to re-connect with what happened that has changed... everything. What happened then is why we are here this morning. This is why you and I have a robust vision for our futures, and why *this day* matters!!

Via Lucis reminds us that He is *here*.

Each station invites us to exercise our faithful imaginations, like recalling the smell of freshly baked bread. We imagine seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling. This helps us to pay attention and notice maybe what it was like for His very surprised followers when He came to them. How He comes to us. Remember what He told us,

“I am with you always... even to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:20

We began taking the Way of Light here at SALT CO two years ago. You can catch up by going to our web page

Last time we were with Thomas and the other disciples when Jesus showed up in the room where they were gathered. No one saw how he came to be there. He offered skeptical Thomas to touch his hands, to put his hand into Jesus' side. But, interesting, we're not explicitly told that Thomas ever touched him. Instead, Thomas confessed, "**My Lord and My God!**" The only time in any of the four Gospels that Jesus is addressed as God.

(This was not something that the Church only figured out 400 years later...)

Now we come to the next Station from John's Gospel, chapter 21.

Take a moment to look around with your faithful imagination, see, hear, touch, smell, taste the setting. What's the air like. Feel the breeze. Watch the brightening in the east.

Let's read together.

Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed "Twin"), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the brothers Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. Simon Peter announced, "I'm going fishing."

The rest of them replied, "We're going with you." They went out and got in the boat. They caught nothing that night. When the sun came up, Jesus was standing on the beach, but they didn't recognize him.

Jesus spoke to them: "Good morning! Did you catch anything for breakfast?"

They answered, "No."

He said, "Throw the net off the right side of the boat and see what happens."

They did what he said. All of a sudden there were so many fish in it, they weren't strong enough to pull it in.

Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Master!"

When Simon Peter realized that it was the Master, he threw on some clothes, for he was stripped for work, and dove into the sea. The other disciples came in by boat for they weren't far from land, a hundred yards or so, pulling along the net full of fish. When they got out of the boat, they saw a fire laid, with fish and bread cooking on it.

Jesus said, "Bring some of the fish you've just caught." Simon Peter joined them and pulled the net to shore—153 big fish! And even with all those fish, the net didn't rip.

Jesus said, "Breakfast is ready." Not one of the disciples dared ask, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Master.

Jesus then took the bread and gave it to them. He did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus had shown himself alive to the disciples since being raised from the dead.

John 21:2-14 The Message

As I read this again, I invite you to see faces. Listen for tone of voice. What do you smell? Notice your thoughts. What are you feeling? What do you want to say, or ask of Jesus? Listen for His response.

Second Reading.

Write out your impressions, questions, thoughts, insights. Maybe draw something that comes to you.

Here is some art you can use as you contemplate

[John 21:2-14 artwork](#)

After a couple of minutes got to the tables.

Table Talk II

1. What do you imagine is going through the seven disciples' minds that night as they work the nets?
2. How do you think you would be feeling when Jesus called out about your "catch"?
3. What do you imagine would be going through your mind as you worked to haul in all these fish?
4. If you were Peter, what would you be feeling in that moment when you hear, "***It is the LORD!***"
5. Describe Jesus.
6. Is there something you would want to say to or ask Him?
7. How does what is happening at this Station help you with a next step?

Reflections

I wonder about the state of heart and mind of Peter and the others after all these strange meetings with the Risen Jesus. What in the world would it mean that *He is risen*? He was there in that Upper Room. But where was He *now*? What does this all mean? What are WE supposed to do? How is this all supposed to go?

What do you do when you have no clue? When you're overwhelmed? Go back to something familiar. Where you have some feeling of competence and say. There's the story of the woman who has lost her partner of decades. She can no longer be in the living room with her family and friends many of whom also have no idea what to say. Quietly she slips into the kitchen to do the dishes.

Peter's response, it seems, to overwhelming news of Jesus' resurrection, was to announce, "***I'm going fishing***". Six others join him.

This Tenth Station of VIA LUCIS takes place at daybreak with Jesus standing on the shore.

I'll be tracking with professor and bible teacher Dale Bruner in how this unfolds. He describes Jesus making four moves to help his friends have a clue. Bruner calls these "four words":

First word- "How are you doing?"

“Children [Greek is PAIDEIA], ***you have no fish, have you?***” The Message has it, ***“Have you caught anything for breakfast?”*** Jesus genuinely wants to know. It is the beginning of re-connection, of empathy.

They worked all night. In their minds as well as in their naked sweating bodies- because they were constantly jumping into the sea to untangle nets. It’s frustrating to work hard at what you believe you really know how to do, what you’re actually good at, and have it all come to, well, nothing...

What are you working at nowadays? Do you need any help with that? Me too.

Jesus’ question invites only one of two responses: Yes or No. Time for honesty. Confession makes for the beginning of a good conversation, and openness to His second word.
Second word- “I have an Idea!”

He said, “Throw the net off the right side of the boat and see what happens.” His “idea” requires a decision on their part. Maybe His proposal rang bells in their memories of a similar situation three years before, when they had to decide about Him, to give Him a try against their own best professional experience and judgement. Here they go again!

Call it risking. But then again, what do they have to lose? Right?

You in a space like that this morning? Maybe the Dr. Phil question is lurking in your mind, ***“How’s what you’re doing working for you?”***

Dallas Willard said Jesus is the smartest man Who ever lived. He knows how to do everything we know how to do better than we do. Whatever it is- pruning a rose bush, running numbers, changing a tire, fixing the dishwasher, setting up a trust, investing in stocks and bonds, even fishing...

It’s been pointed out that in the Gospels Peter only catches fish with Jesus’ help.

You ready for His “idea”?

All they had to decide to do was throw their nets on the other side of the boat. An effort, but doable. Look at what came of it! You and I do what we can that is within our capacity to do, however limited, and sometimes this is what happens to us too. You reach out to someone with a simple check in phone call. The next thing you know you're sharing your lives with one another! I could tell you all manner of stories of how by just saying "Yes", by taking a "risk", whole new ministries were birthed (Don and Margo, Steve K, taking a walk in the parking lot one evening at WPC led to Beth Ex, Tom and I have an "idea" for a Car Show...) You have stories like this too.

We just have no idea. He does!

Now they look more closely at this One standing on the shore. The light is better. It seems it was John who shouted, "***It's the Lord!***"

I like this depiction of that moment

SLIDE

[Breakfast on the seashore with Jesus](#)

I'm a swimmer. As far as I'm concerned this is the first 100 yd. freestyle ever recorded. Counter intuitively, Peter put *on* his clothes and dives in for the sprint to Jesus leaving the others to haul ashore 153 fish.

Want to nerd out on that number for a moment? One thought, a catch that big would inspire a proud fisherman to count them up, make this believable. We all know how fishermen can get...

I personally like another proposal. There was a well-known poem in that day by Oppian who asserted that there were 153 different kinds of fish.

In other words, under Jesus' guidance, they would be fishing for all kinds of people. Nice. ("*Go therefore and make disciples of all different kinds of people...*" Matt. 28:19). There are at least 153 different kinds of people!

Jesus sets the scene on the beach.

Risen One, who has just conquered death, darkness, Satan and evil, who holds all authority in heaven and earth, picture *Him* gathering wood, striking flint against steel, blowing on the sparks, fanning them into flame. Picture his scarred hands catching fish and preparing them for the spit over now ready coals, setting bread to warm on stones by the fire .

Because He knew his friends well. After all they had been through, working all night, hauling this catch ashore, they would be... what is the word we use when we get like this?

Hangry. We all get it about hangriness.

What's needed? What's the first thing? *Breakfast* to fill their empty bellies. And by way of their bellies, also their souls. Because our bodies are ensouled, and our souls embodied.

Those who serve Him at Fresh Market know all about how this works.

Try to take this in. Here is the Lord of the Universe preparing breakfast for his friends. To settle them. Do together what they always did. For years. To get them ready, especially Peter, for a conversation.

But first there are two more words...

Third word- "I'd like to use what you have!"

Love this. "***Bring some of the fish you just caught***" (with My help!).

What you and I can do, what you and I bring, *matters*. The five loaves and two fish mattered the little boy brought to Jesus. Bruner writes, "Jesus is really interested in what we do and not only wants to see our work but wants to use our work (which is the fruit of his gift) in his self-revealing mission."

Dale Bruner in The Gospel of John, p. 1212

Everything you know how to do, is useful in the work of the kingdom of God.

Take a moment at your table and share one thing you know how to do. Lightning round! One minute. Ready? Go!

I wonder how the Lord of the Universe would love to employ what you know how to do? Let's talk!

Jesus' fourth word, his fourth discipling move is this:

Fourth word- "Let's have a meal together!"

"Come and have breakfast!" We could talk a long time together about meals we've shared with family and friends. How important our "tables" are as places for "be-friending", re-connecting, re-membering, thinking together, making decisions.

Research backs up what we already know...

- Those who share more meals with others report significantly higher levels of life satisfaction and positive affect, and lower levels of negative affect. This is true across ages, genders, countries, cultures, and regions.
- In the United States, using data from the American Time Use Survey, we find clear evidence that Americans are spending more and more time dining alone. In 2023, roughly 1 in 4 Americans reported eating all of their meals alone the previous day – an increase of 53% since 2003. Dining alone has become more prevalent for every age group, *but especially for young people.*

from World Happiness Report 2025/Chapter 3

Jesus' preferred means of mission and discipleship was to share a meal.

One more thing. Not one of the disciples dared to ask Him, **"Who are you because they knew it was the Lord."** This is honest. In between the lines there is a hint of temptation to ask. Belief and doubt move in just

about all of us- worship and wonder, certainty and searching, grasping yet also knowing in our bones who He is, how He is, cannot be “grasped”.

The Stations of the Resurrection *invite* wonder. And doubts become flags marking where to dig for still hidden treasure.

Maybe we will never not be digging...

Prayer

Doxology

A Fisherman's Blessing

"As you head out onto the high seas, may the winds be fair and the waters kind. May your nets come up heavy, your gear hold strong, and your course remain true"

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit be with you this day, now and forever. Go in peace and serve the Lord! Amen!