

2023 EASTER REFLECTION BOOKLET | YEAR A

# The Word The Life of the World

3rd Sunday of Easter

New Life Through The Word



3rd Sunday of Easter

New Life Through The Word



## Opening Prayer

God our Father, source of all goodness, we thank You for the gift of our lives. There is no new life without You and there will be no new life without Your Word being active and alive in our lives. We thank You for leading and guiding us in the right path and closer to You. We come together to contemplate on the mystery of Your Son's resurrection, so that we may better dwell in You and to be more and more like Jesus, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

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Readings

*3rd Sunday of Easter*

# *New Life Through The Word*

## **1st Reading: Acts of the Apostles 2:14, 22-33**

We hear from a radically transformed Peter declaring the resurrection of Jesus and its messianic significance. By referring to Jesus as a man three times in the reading, he was impressing upon the audience that the miracle of a dead person being brought back to life did indeed take place, made possible by God our Father in fulfilment of His promise in the Old Testament. The apostles themselves were eyewitnesses to the risen Christ, with further proof evident from the descent of the Holy Spirit on the community of believers.

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## **2nd Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-21**

In his letter, Peter expounds on his preachings recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Writing to believers residing among Gentiles across different regions, he was emphasising the importance of how they chose to act and behave, especially while in a foreign land. Previously, the communities were living in unenlightened ways shaped by past generations. But having been made aware of Jesus' identity, it was time for them to change and take up the new life offered by Him, obtained through God the Father raising Him from the dead.

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# *New Life Through The Word*

**Gospel: Luke 24:13-35**

In this setting, Jesus made contact but disguised as a stranger, and the two apostles gave Him a brief summary of His life. Despite their disbelief which probably prompted them to leave Jerusalem and their companions behind, Jesus exercised patience in using Scripture to enlighten them.

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**Gospel: Luke 24:13-35**

By then, their desolation had lifted enough for them to see the need of the other and extend hospitality. Because of their response, they were able to partake in a Eucharistic meal during which they finally recognised the risen Lord. Immediately, they chose to return to the community to share their experience.

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Reflections



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# New Life Through The Word



We all experience changes in our lives. Some, such as ageing, are beyond our control. There are others which are initiated by us because we are dissatisfied with the current state of affairs, like modifying our diet or limiting time on social media. One thing is certain - change is difficult, as those who regularly make and fail to keep New Year's resolutions can attest to. Regardless of whether it had been a conscious intent on Peter's part, it is clear that he was a completely different person after his encounters with the resurrected Jesus.

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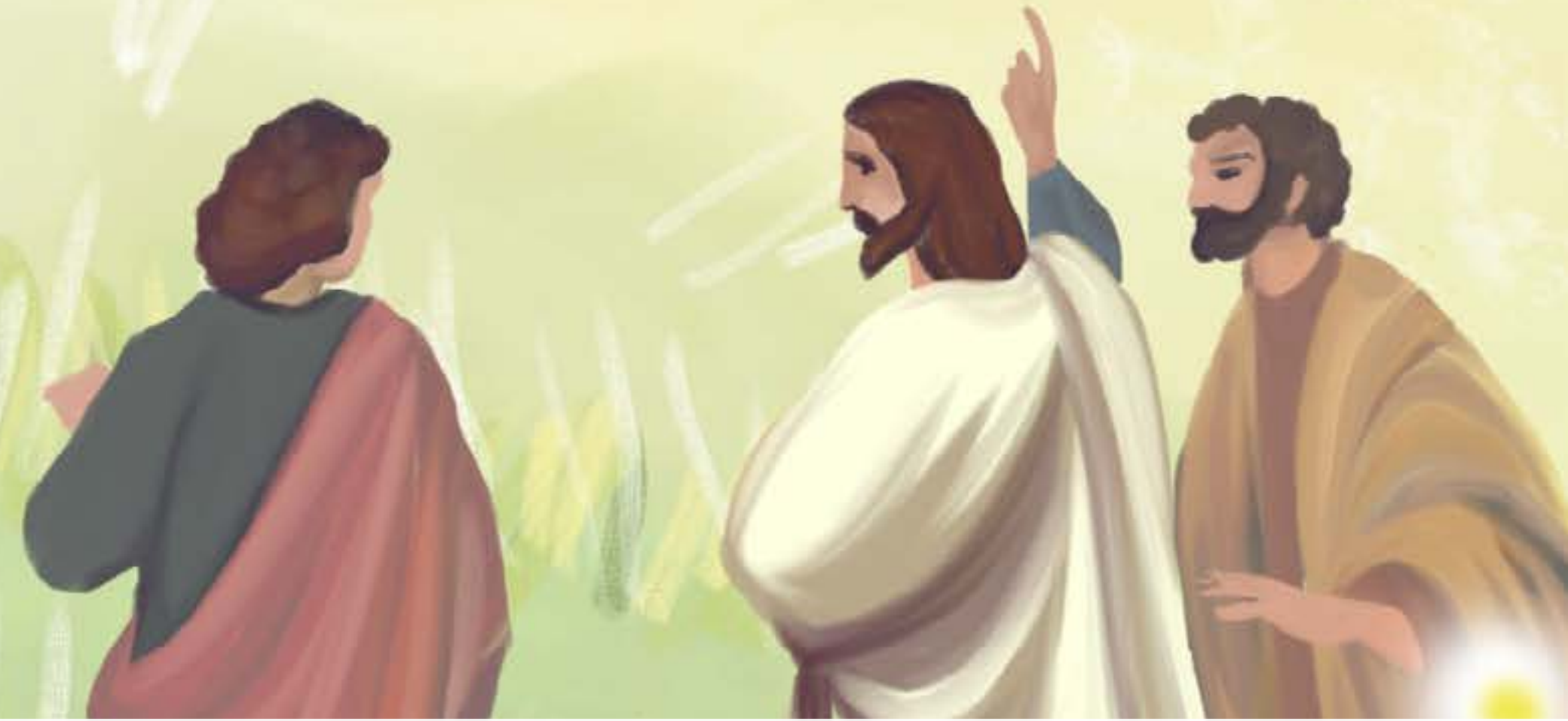
# New Life Through The Word



From a bumbling apostle, he became a leader able to preach and heal like his master even though the latter was no longer physically present. By receiving the Holy Spirit and availing himself with scripture and the community of believers, Peter underwent a transformation which would not have been possible through sheer willpower.

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Similarly, we have been gifted with these same tools even if we lack his first-hand witnessing. Just like the apostles headed to Emmaus, we allow negative emotions to overtake us. The paschal mystery of Jesus comprises His passion, death, resurrection and ascension. However, the first two events have tended to receive a disproportionately greater amount of attention. Good Friday service attracts the largest attendance at church, while the crucifix features prominently in our religion.

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To have a balanced perspective and understanding, it would help to spend more time contemplating on and talking about the resurrection narratives, which form the basis for our faith. Following the examples of Peter and the other apostles throughout the New Testament, we can be confident in drawing strength from the risen Lord to be moulded into life-giving disciples while experiencing joy amidst resistance and challenges.

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Sharing Questions

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# New Life Through The Word

## Personal Reflection & Sharing Questions

What struck you from the passages of scripture?

What stirs your heart? Remain with it for a while.

- Peter went through a radical change because he believed. What radical change have you made in your life because of the Word of God?
- If the Word of God does not give you new life, where do you look to find new life?



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# New Life Through The Word

Sharing Questions

## For Small Christian Communities

- Is your community able to listen to the despair and pain of others without jumping into giving solutions?
- What are the words of life that you offer to those in the community?  
Are these words the Word of God?



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# New Life Through The Word



## Sharing Questions For Ministry

- During the Easter season, has the ministry moved from death to the old ways to newness of life that the resurrected Lord is offering?
- Has the celebration of Easter set you free from the hurts and biasness that ministry members have inflicted on you?



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# New Life Through The Word

## Sharing Questions For Family

- In what ways is your family new because of the celebration of Easter?
- Are you allowing the risen Christ to show you more desirable ways of family life that would strengthen relationships with one another?



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# New Life Through The Word



Take home

New life is always possible with Jesus in our hearts.

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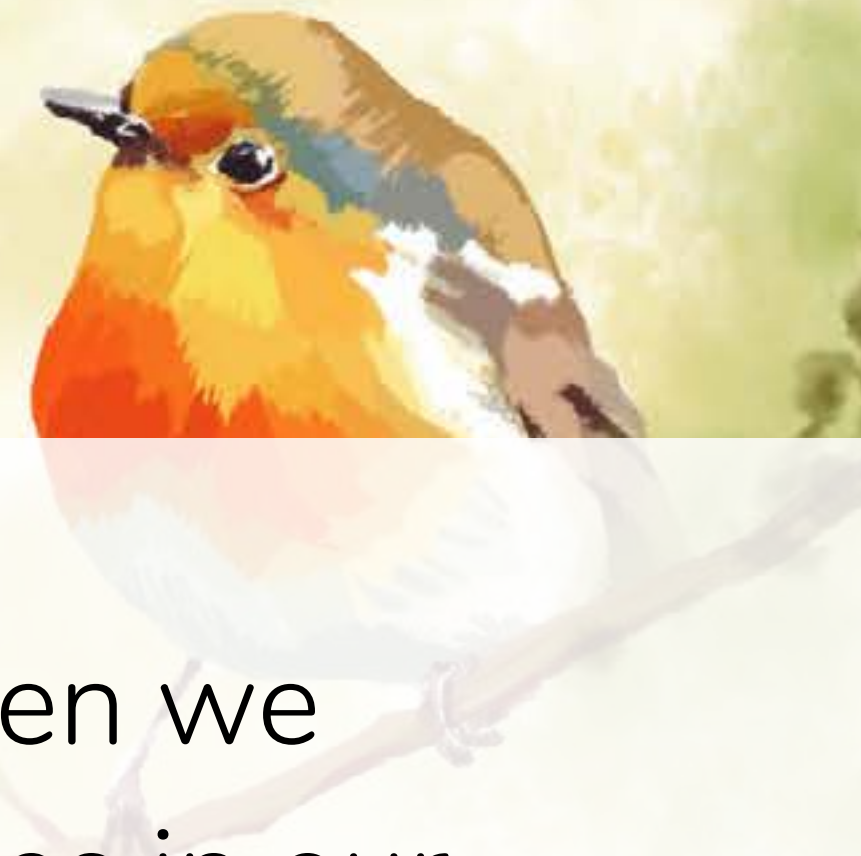
# New Life Through The Word



## Doing your bit

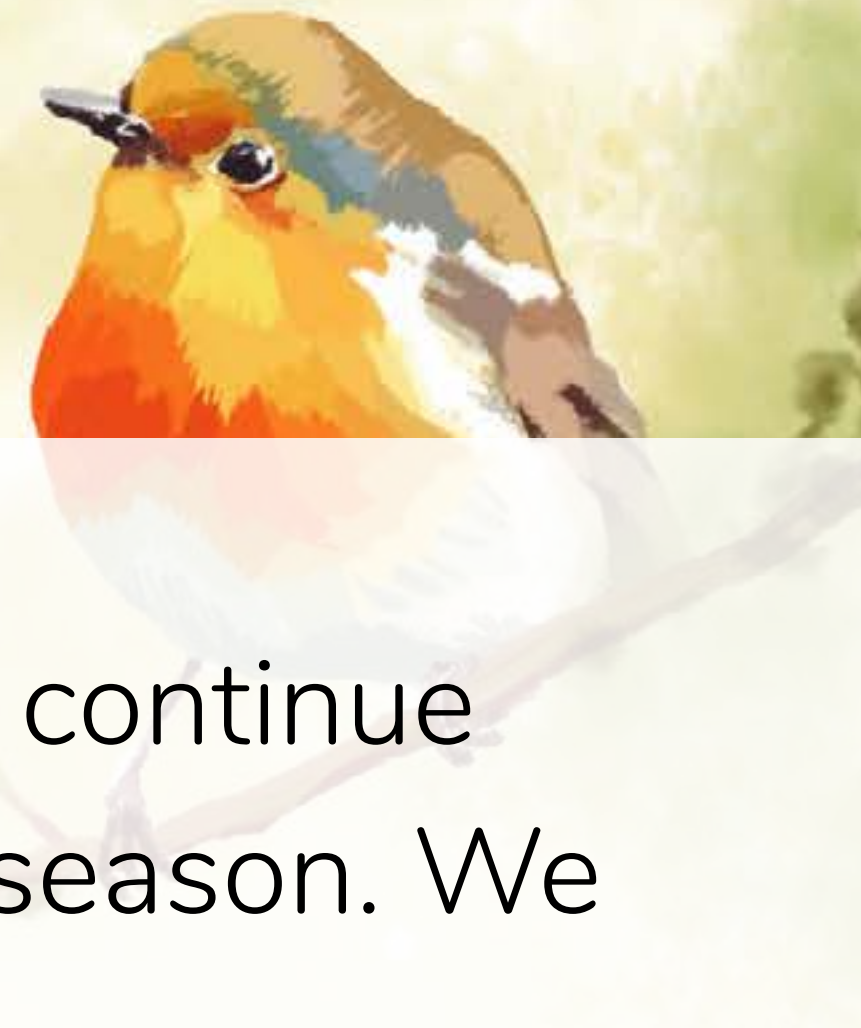
Share what you have written to the person you have been praying for and ask for their response to what you have written. If you are part of a ministry or a community or you have a family, share what you have written and what the response of the person you have been praying for with your ministry or community or family. Pray again the three verses that had struck you.

# Closing Prayer



God our Father, Your love and generosity towards us never ceases, even when we fail to trust You or choose to stray from Your ways. We all experience changes in our lives and in several of them we resist the changes. Peter changed completely when he encountered the risen Lord. You call us to have a balanced perspective of life and understand that to be moulded into a life-giving disciple, we need to change while experiencing challenges and resistances from both inside and outside of ourselves.

# Closing Prayer



Your Word has always guided Your chosen people. We are grateful that You continue to open Your Word to us as we make this journey of faith during this Easter season. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen