

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.
(Jesus and the Miraculous Catch of Fish)

Dearly beloved:

Next Sunday, April 30th is the Second Sunday after Easter. Our reading for this Sunday is about Jesus appearing for the third time to His disciples by the Sea of Tiberias after He was raised from the dead. The disciples were fishing, as they have all returned to their previous jobs as fishermen after Jesus' death. The Gospels give us a vivid picture of the reality of the Resurrection.

Jesus went out of his way to offer His disciples various proofs of His resurrection – that He is real and true flesh, not just a spirit or ghost. Jesus stood on the shore and asked them, friends, do you have any fish and their answer was no. He said to them to throw their net on the right side of the boat and when they did, they were unable to haul the net in because it became so heavy with the large number of fish caught in it. After the miraculous catch, Jesus told Peter that he would be 'catching people' for the kingdom of God. After Jesus performed the miraculous catch of fish, He prepared a breakfast and ate with them.

You remember that our Vicar, Raju Varghese Achen explained to us a few weeks ago the significance of the logo of fish used by early Christians and imprinted on the walls of the churches. We can still see these emblems on the walls of old orthodox churches in Kerala. The history of the Christian fish symbol goes back even further than the cross. The fish gave them something simple and easily recognizable so it is a code used by Christians during persecution time. In the second century, St. Clement of Alexandria suggested that Christians identify themselves with a seal engraved with a fish because the word fish was mentioned several times in the Holy Bible. St. Clement was a Greek theologian and he used the Greek word for fish "ichthys" to mean "Jesus Christ, Son of God Saviour". This idea might have also been partly a protest against the pagan emperors of that time, who named themselves God's Son or in Greek, "Theou Yios". In the 4th century, the cross became a more popular symbol for Christians, and the symbolism of the fish gradually disappeared.

Lord Jesus, You are the Resurrection and the Life. Increase our faith in the power of Your resurrection that we may never doubt Your word nor be away from your presence.

Please read the following Bible verses, in preparation for this Sunday's commemoration.

Bible readings for Sunday, April 30th, 2006.
(Second Sunday after Easter)

Before Holy Qurbana:

Exodus - **14: 26-31**
Joshua - **6: 9-21**
Great Wisdom - **1: 1-8**

Holy Qurbana

General Epistles: **Acts** - **13: 26-39**
Epistles of St. Paul: **Ephesians** - **6: 10-20**
Holy Gospel: **St. John** - **21: 1-14**

Next Sunday, May 7th is Third Sunday After Easter.

With prayers,
Thomas Alex