

***Saint Luke Ev. Lutheran
Church—WELS
Sermon by Pastor A. Schultz
3rd Sunday of Easter
April 14, 2013 John 21:1-14***



21 Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: ² Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. ³ "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. ⁴ Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. ⁵ He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. ⁶ He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. ⁷ Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. ⁸ The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. ⁹ When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." ¹¹ So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

Did you ever watch the Discovery Channel TV show called The Deadliest Catch? It's about small ships called the Northwestern, the Wizard, the Time Bandit. They go out off the coast of Alaska to catch King Crabs and later Snow Crabs. These little ships go crashing and smashing into the salt water – with frozen chunks of saltwater splashing in your face. The fishermen wrench these huge metal cages out of the water – over the side of their ship. They dump the cages open – and the crabs fall out. They quickly sort them – big ones they keep – too small – they pitch them back overboard. The ship goes up and down – up and down. Waves wash over the side again and again. Parts of the cage or the cables that wench the cages in and out snap. People literally get swept off their feet – crashing into each other – crashing into equipment – sometimes even washing people overboard. "Man overboard!" – they cry out and desperately try to rescue the fisherman being washed away. The fishermen fight. They fight each other. They fight the weather and the crabs. They fight with other ships – trying to put their crab pots in the best places to catch crabs. It's all very tense – very nerve wracking! People literally risking their life so other people can go to nice restaurants – and order the crab! If you stop and think about it – life is not easy. You don't have to go to sea off Alaska to know that life is not easy. There is danger all around – physical danger – and far more deadly – spiritual danger! This 3rd Sunday of Easter God's Word is a word of powerful comfort:

Jesus takes Very Good Care of Us!

1. He provides all our physical needs

2. He also provides all our spiritual needs!

Today is the 3rd Sunday of Easter. We have been working through the Gospel of the disciple Jesus loved. Easter Sunday – John chapter 20. Mary Magdalene comes to Jesus’ tomb and finds it unguarded and open. Jesus is not in the grave and his disciples are in a panic! Mary Magdalene sees Jesus but thinks he is the Gardener. All he has to do is say her name – “Mary!” – and she knows it’s Jesus. Last Sunday – the next part of John chapter 20. The disciples are together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews. Suddenly Jesus is among them. He shows his disciples his hands and side. It’s difficult – even actually seeing and touching Jesus – it’s difficult to believe he is really alive again. Things like that just don’t happen! A week later – doubting Thomas is still doubting – demanding eye witness proof that Jesus is alive. Jesus shows his friend – yes, in fact it is really me! Today it’s a week later when Simon Peter is the first to act.

It happened this way: ² Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. ³ “I’m going out to fish,” Simon Peter told them, and they said, “We’ll go with you.” Many of Jesus’ disciples were fishermen. They were literally cleaning and mending their nets when Jesus came and said, “**Follow me!**” They left everything and followed Jesus these past years. And so it isn’t unexpected that Simon Peter would say – **I’m going fishing!** And it isn’t unexpected that Thomas, Nathaniel, James and John and two other disciples would say **we will go fishing too. So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.**⁴ Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.⁵ He called out to them, “Friends, haven’t you any fish?” “No,” they answered. Through the night they threw their nets into the water – waited – pulled them out again – only to find them empty – again and again. That would be discouraging! When the sun was coming up – Jesus stood on the shore – although you couldn’t tell it was Jesus. “**Friends, haven’t you any fish!**” I’m sure it wasn’t quick nor loudly that they called back, “**No!**” No fish! Don’t you hate when that happens? Jesus told them: “**Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.**” That sounds kind of silly – truth be told – doesn’t it? I mean you are out on the lake – drifting – moving – pushed by the waves this way and that. **Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find fish?** *Seriously?*

When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. This is a miracle – plain and simple. Jesus put so many fish into their net – they couldn’t get the net out of the water! This should come as absolutely no surprise to anyone! Think about it! Jesus – the eternal Son of God – invented fish! There are lots of fish here in Wisconsin. There are blue-gills, crappies, sun-fish, northern and walleyes and muskies. There are in Lake Michigan lake trout and salmon. There are catfish and bull-heads and sturgeon! Jesus invented the Sea Dragon – a close relative to the Sea Horse – it has appendages that look like leaves – so it can blend in with and hide in the middle of sea weed. There are clown fish – like Finding Nemo. There are sharks – great white ones. There are dolphins that you can swim with. There are killer whales – that are very dangerous to swim with – even if you play with them – and think you are their friend! There are guppies and angel fish – gold fish and silver dollar fish – and funny little fish with the mouth like a suction cup that fastens on to the side of the aquarium and keeps it clean! Recently scientists discovered eelpout fish some 6 miles deep off the coast of New Zealand. Imagine if Watertown was the top of the ocean you would find these fish down, down, down, down – all the way to Johnson Creek! There are fish kind of lumpy pale peach colored so deep in the water – the sunshine doesn’t penetrate that deeply! If Jesus made all these creatures – not to mention Piranha and the octopus and the star fish. If Jesus designed and engineered and built and maintains – all these fish – what a small thing it is – to load a bunch of fish into Simon Peter’s net!

⁷ Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “**It is the Lord!**” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “**It is the Lord,**” he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off)

and jumped into the water. ⁸ The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. ⁹ When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." ¹¹ So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. Simon Peter was excited to see the Lord Jesus. He couldn't wait to get the net secured and to sail to the shore. He jumped overboard and swam a football field to the shore! How excited are we to see Jesus? You have to ask yourself! When someone very special is coming to visit – do you watch out the front window? Or do you literally go out into the front door and watch for them? If you ever want to have something touch your heart – go to the arrival part of the international wing of the air port! You can meet Jesus here at Church! You can meet him Thursday nights – Sunday mornings – meet him in Sunday School and Teen Bible Class and Adult Bible Class. You can have breakfast with Jesus at Perkins on Thursday mornings at 7 a.m. or somebody's house on Thursday morning at 9:30 a.m. or Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. You could meet Jesus last weekend at Olympia Village – some 500+ women for Bible study and for worship and singing. You can meet Jesus Saturday morning at Faith in Fond du Lac – for the LWMS Spring Rally. Any time you read God's Word – you meet Jesus. And when Judgment Day comes – when the skies tear open and all the angels play their trumpets and sing – we will see Jesus face to face! You can see Jesus in your home – with pictures and paintings of Jesus. Do you have pictures of Jesus all around your home? If people come to visit you – do you have crosses and pictures of Jesus all every the place – so that in a moment – people who come to your home – know that you love Jesus? Is it true of you – like in the movie *New In Town* – that we are different from sophisticated big city big business people – we bring Jesus into every day conversation? When people talk about the weather – all the rain or all the cold or last year's drought – do you mention Jesus? Jesus is everywhere – if you just look through the eyes of faith!

¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. This is by far the most important part. Jesus is risen from the dead. He is the risen and living Christ! He has done battle with death and the grave and conquered all his foes. All our sins have been forgiven. Every day the news is full of stories of people being rescued. The other day a farmer was trying to pull up a stump. It was really muddy – on his boots and under the tractor. He tried to pull of the stump – the tractor slipped – the farmer slipped. He fell off the tractor and the tractor fell on him making it almost impossible for him to breath. He cried out as best he could for help. His teen-age daughters heard him. And with the sudden super-human strength Jesus gave them – they lifted up the 3,000 pound tractor and pulled their father part-way out! People last week got lost hiking in the mountains – in the forest. One by one they were found and rescued! Families rejoice that their young people were saved. All of these people – saved for now from physical death will – in the end ultimately suffer physical death. But the precious good news is – Jesus died and rose again so we can live by him forever in Heaven. That's why we don't have to worry and wonder and fear and obsess – what's going to happen to me. Whenever we die – we will wake up by Jesus in Heaven. Because Jesus lives – we too will live – just for time but for eternity!

¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. There are few things more fun than a Friday night fish fry in Wisconsin. Grow up in Northern Illinois and they have very good Italian beef – but not fish fries. A good fish fry has a little time beforehand to have an old fashioned with fruit or olives – a glass of wine or a cold beer. Most fish fries are all you can eat – perch or haddock maybe walleye – deep fried in beer batter or baked with butter to dip it. Sometimes they have shrimp, too. There is rye bread and cole slaw and German and American potato salad! There are few things more fun than a Friday fish fry with your family or with

your best friends. But a fish fry with Jesus would be the very best – no doubt! A fish fry that Jesus made would be literally flawless! It would be the best fish you ever tasted – the best baked barley loaves you had ever tasted! It would be the best! And the dinner conversation – would be the best, too! You wouldn't need to say a word – just listen. I mean you could ask questions if you wanted to – and Jesus would know all the answers. He might say – that's not for you to know – like when is Judgment Day going to come! Soon. Soon. You just have to wait. But it would be the best to just listen – to listen and learn. You would hang on every word – and so? And Jesus would tell you again and again – you don't need to worry about anything! Jesus assures us – he will most certainly give us this day our daily bread. And Jesus will also give us every good and precious spiritual gift – until we come home – home to Heaven! Amen!

To God alone all glory!