



**BIBLE STUDY for
THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER**



Focus Text: Acts 4: 32 - 35

Additional texts: Psalm 133; 1 John 1: 1 - 2: 2; John 20: 19 - 31

Our focus text is a snapshot of the Early Church. It is a summary description of the early Christian community, similar to that of Acts 2: 42-47. The central emphasis, very typical of Luke, the writer of Acts, is on the sharing of possessions – or, as we might say today, on closing the gap between rich and poor. This selfless sharing is possible, the text reminds us, because the believers are united ‘in heart and soul’. And they have a leadership which focuses on the core business – that of ‘testifying to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus’.

If we place this passage in context, it follows an account of the Church’s united response to state persecution and Peter and John’s miraculous (if temporary) release from that persecution. The passage is followed by two vividly contrasting examples of how sharing happened, for Barnabus and then for Ananias and Sapphira. Those examples are in turn followed by another summary description of the early Church (Acts 5: 12-16) where the miraculous powers of the apostles are emphasised.

In this season of preparation for Pentecost, this passage gives us a wonderful picture of God’s intentions for the Church – what it means to be the Body of Christ, the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And we are given the reasons why the early Church fulfilled and displayed those intentions. So too, therefore, we are shown how the Church today, large or small, national or local, wherever it appears, can also fulfil and display those intentions.

When members of our congregation have experienced the risen Christ and are aware of and are open to the power of the Spirit, the unity and selfless love of the first church should surely be evident in our church today. We will thus experience the joy of walking together in faith with Jesus every day and will demonstrate our faith through sacrificial sharing and caring.

(From Word and Worship – Year B 2020-2021; 176, 177)

- How can you keep the Easter experience of the risen Christ alive in your daily life?
- How can that experience lead you into a life of sharing and caring both at an individual level and at a parish level?

*Let us pray
Living God,
long ago, faithful women
proclaimed the good news
of Jesus' resurrection,
and the world was changed forever.
Teach us to keep faith with them,
that our witness may be as bold,
our love as deep,
and our faith as true.
Amen*