

# Making Space for God

## Easter Prayer

Christ is Risen: The world below lies desolate  
Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen  
Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing  
Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty  
Christ is Risen indeed from the dead,  
the first of the sleepers,  
Glory and power are his forever and ever<sup>1</sup>  
St. Hippolytus (AD 190-236)



*The Great Catch of Fish, by Steven Stuckey, 16x20 Mixed Media on Paper, 2011*

## Arrival

Take thirty minutes to settle yourself. Close your eyes, take deep breaths, and try to absorb the quiet stillness of the gardens.

- What is happening to your body today? Are you anxious, tired, restless, or sleepy? Give your body to Jesus for the day. He owns it.
- What family or ministry concerns press on your mind? Note these but don't dwell on them. Hand them to Jesus for safekeeping.
- What hopes and fears do you have as you prepare to meet with your Father in heaven? He promises to listen. He loves us like no other on earth. Ask him to be your shelter for the day.

## Scripture Reading: John 21:1-14 Jesus and the Miraculous Catch of Fish

Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: <sup>2</sup> Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as The Twin), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. <sup>3</sup> "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.

<sup>4</sup> Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?"

"No," they answered.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards.

<sup>9</sup> When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. <sup>14</sup> This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. (NIV)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Under Creative Commons License: <http://www.faithandworship.com/prayerseaster>

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## *Reflective Questions*

This transitional passage at the end of John's gospel mirrors a story that took place at the beginning of Luke's gospel (see Luke 5). Jesus was no longer physically visible to his disciples each day as before. Instead he appeared unexpectedly and then disappeared again. The disciples were on their own having to figure out a way forward. Seven of the remaining eleven returned to something familiar—fishing. Then something unexpected happened.

1. Put yourself in the scene. How might the men have felt after fishing all night and catching nothing? When have you felt similar things?
2. Jesus appeared in a very ordinary, subtle way to the weary disciples. He could easily have been missed. Take a moment to feel the chilly early morning air, smell the fish and toasting bread, and let the smoky fire sting your eyes. In what ordinary way might he have appeared to you recently?
3. What mixed emotions might Peter have been experiencing? Sit with those to see if you resonate with any of them.
4. Imagine being the person who counted the fish and noticed that the fragile net was not torn. What lesson is there in that? Thank Jesus for what he has revealed to you.

## *Reading for Reflection:*

Any of us, when faced with human suffering, wonder, "What can I do?" The Missionaries of Charity gave me a simple lesson that applies to any crisis. You do what's possible in the moment, of course, but you take time to pray. You make space for it, allowing God the room to work in your heart. Alone you cannot perform the miracles sometimes required—especially at the epicenter of a major famine.

Sr. Bertilla said to me, "David, people think our ministry is only about physical needs and activism. They are so wrong. We are called to pray, first and foremost. We sisters each spend at least five hours on our knees every single day."

*David Ward speaking about the 1980 famine crisis in Ethiopia in World Vision Magazine*

The perpetual threat to living a real life, an authentic and true and honest life, is to evade or dump "this man," this Jesus, this ordinary way he comes to us and this inglorious company he keeps, and pretentiously attempt to be our own god or to fashion a glamorous god or gods that appeal to our vanity. When it comes to dealing with God, most of us spend considerable time trying our own hands at either being or making gods. Jesus blocks the way. Jesus is not a god of our own making and he is certainly not a god designed to win popularity contests.

*Eugene Peterson in Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places, page 36*

***Benediction-*** *Lord you have set your servant free to go in peace as you have promised; for my eyes have seen the Savior whom you have prepared for all the world to see: a Light to enlighten the nations, and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*