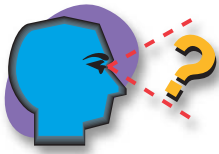


John



Responses to the Questions

NOTE: BE SURE TO ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS YOURSELF BEFORE READING THE ANSWERS IN ORDER TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS STUDY.

Read John 20:19-31

1. Jesus appears to the disciples in the evening, hours after his appearance to the grieving and faithful Mary Magdalene. Possibly this is because he wishes to test the apostles' faith, but the text does not say. Certainly the apostles have not taken to heart the witness of the Magdalene or the Emmaus disciples, since John tells us that they were in hiding due to their fear of the Jews, lest what befell Jesus befall them too.
2. The Hebrew word for "peace" is "shalom". It denotes more than mere absence of conflict and refers instead to the profound peace of a family in harmony.
3. The reason Jesus shows his hands and feet to his disciples is to reassure them that he is raised bodily. He is not a merely ghost or figment of their imaginations. Nor has he stripped off his humanity and dissolved back into disembodied deity. Rather, he is truly risen in his full and embodied humanity. This matters because we shall one day be glorified bodily as he is.
4. The source of the Church's missionary work is the Holy Spirit which Jesus breathed on the Church with the command to go to the world just as his Father had sent him.
5. What is the significance of Jesus breathing on the disciples? The Spirit is the "pneuma" or "ruah": the "breath" of God. When Jesus breathes on the disciples he confers on them the same Spirit of God which dwelt in him.
6. The sacrament of Reconciliation (also known as Penance or Confession). The apostles are empowered to forgive and retain sins with the authority of Christ himself. This grace is also conferred on their successors, the bishops, and on priests ordained by those bishops.
7. Thomas struggles to believe in the absence of evidence for his senses. The Pharisees struggled to disbelieve despite the evidence of their senses.
8. The Eighth Day signifies, not only that Jesus again appears on the following Sunday, but the New Creation of the Resurrection. The Old Sabbath was observed on the Seventh Day. Jesus appearance on the Eighth Day signifies the renewal of the whole Creation in Christ. Jesus does gently rebuke Thomas for his lack of faith, but he does not reject him. Instead, he helps Thomas in his weakness and shows his hands and side to Thomas. Thomas responds with the strongest declaration of faith in the New Testament. Jesus pronounces a blessing on all who believe without seeing.



Responses to the Questions (cont.)

9. No.

10. John records enough information about Jesus so that we may know that Jesus is the Christ and that, believing in him, we may have life in his name.