

Go Forth...

A SERVICE OF U.S. CATHOLIC MISSION ASSOCIATION

MISSIONARY COMMENTARY

HOT HEARTS

SUNDAY READINGS:

Acts 2:14, 22-33

Psalms 16:1-2, 5, 7-11 / 1

1 Peter 1:17-21

Luke 24:13-35

Something seemed familiar to me as I made my way to the appointed spot, right under a large, spreading tree. Many of us look nervously around, expecting the police to show up. Three gifted orators spoke in quick succession to the crowd, and then two guitarists played and sang in harmony, with refreshing lyrics that were seldom heard in those dark days—about freedom, justice, democracy and the people. And then, it hit me.

COMMENTARY

A young friend in Villa Francia—a hot spot of resistance to the Pinochet regime in Chile's capital, in 1983—whispered an invitation to me to attend a gathering of speakers, who would openly denounce the abuses of the regime in a quick, ten-minute rally in a small park of the neighborhood a few days later.



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The Liberty Tree, on the Boston Common! Just like our revolutionary forebears, brave women and men right in front of me were daring to speak out under a particular tree—lamplit in our colonial times—and bring the oppressed together in unauthorized assemblies, reminding us of our deepest values. These young activists spoke the language of their audience, just as Peter did in our first reading, and just as Our Lord spoke to his disciples, whom he found confused and sad, and in need of God’s perspective on events, and renewed life.

“Were not our hearts burning within us, while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?”

We, too, now make this journey in the midst of confusing, disheartening times, suddenly reminded, by the teaching and gestures of Our Risen Lord, to see disastrous events in a fresh perspective, born of openness to the Word of God, and to thrill at the sight of carefully broken bread, shared out once again among us.

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NOTES ON THE SUNDAY READINGS:

First Reading – Acts 2:14, 22-33: Peter presents a clear, compelling interpretation of recent events in terms and shared meanings the crowd gathered in Jerusalem can understand, with the warmth and light of the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11: This song of trust moves us from expressing our faith and confidence in the Lord to the joyful discovery of a “path of life” in God’s presence.

Second Reading – 1 Peter 1:17-21 : Peter’s perspective in this reading, taken from the beginning of his letter to the faraway Christian communities growing in Asia Minor, is centered on God—that is, that Christians have a sure basis for hope, because God himself raised Jesus from the dead and gave him glory.

Gospel – Luke 24:13-35: Luke is inspired to carefully place his emotional, detailed account of two disciples encountering the Risen Christ as a bridge, between the shock of individual experiences of the living Jesus and the shock of communal experiences of the Resurrected One, as we see both community and the Breaking of the Bread grow among the followers of Jesus.

Notes and Commentary by by Fr. Bob Mosher,
a member of the *Missionary Society of Saint Columban*.

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