

## Second Thursday of Easter ~ 4/19

"God exalted Him on a tree, God exalted Him at His right hand as leader and Saviour that He might bring repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." (Acts 5:30-32)

We have all seen people who seem to look exactly like someone else we know or at least have some very similar characteristics. Some recent research suggests that if we follow the genealogies of these people back for several generations we may well find that there is in fact a relationship. The study suggests that certain bone structure and facial configurations come from certain ethnic groups or geographical regions.

In a spiritual sense perhaps the author of Acts suggests something similar. The writer tells us that he and the other apostles were witnesses to the fact that God exalted Jesus. He goes on to say that the Holy Spirit also is a witness along with all who obey God. That means that those of us today, in this twenty-first century who live in the light of the Spirit are also witnesses to the redeeming power of God's exalted Son. We find that our spiritual genealogy is in a direct line from the Apostles and other original witnesses of Jesus' act of salvation. When we look at a true follower of Jesus today we see the first apostles. The structure of faith is the same and the characteristic activities will be very similar to those of Peter and James and John and Mary.

When we ponder about what life was like for those who lived at the time of Jesus we need to realize that we are looking only to understand the physical world of His day. The spiritual world hasn't changed much. The human struggles for security, freedom, love and acceptance are similar. When we wonder about eternal life we can be sure that our ancestors did too. When we anguish over our failings and our sins we need to know that we live in a long line of anguished believers. When the fire of the Spirit burns brightly inside we need to remember that the same fire has burned in followers of Jesus for centuries. There are lots of similar traits in the Christian family.

The next time you recognize a Christian by his or her loving actions remember that you are seeing your relative in faith.

### *Questions for Reflection*

- 1. What are the most outstanding characteristics for a Christian?*
- 2. In what group of people have I been surprised to find these characteristics?*

*Prayer: Lord, help me to see the similarities of faith that bind all people together. May I see the blessings of belonging to the long line of your faithful followers.*