

Second Sunday after Resurrection

Lectionary Title 20: **Witnessing to the Risen Lord**

*Old Testament: Isaiah 43:10-12* (NRSV)

<sup>10</sup>You are my witnesses, says the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. <sup>11</sup>I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no saviour. <sup>12</sup>I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses, says the LORD.

*New Testament: John 21:4-19* (NRSV)

<sup>4</sup>Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.' <sup>6</sup>He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. <sup>7</sup>That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake. <sup>8</sup>But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards<sup>2</sup> off. <sup>9</sup>When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' <sup>11</sup>So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. <sup>12</sup>Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. <sup>14</sup>This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Jesus and Peter

<sup>15</sup>When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' <sup>16</sup>A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' <sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. <sup>18</sup>Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' <sup>19</sup>(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'

**General Concept: Having encountered the Risen Lord, the disciples went about telling the good news of God's victory over sin and death.**

*Key Concepts in the Different Age Levels in Sunday School*

N/K/YE: **The disciples tell others that Jesus is alive.**

ME/OE: **The disciples announce that Jesus is alive.**

Y: **The disciples of Jesus proclaim and witness the Good News of God's victory over sin and death.**

A: **Having encountered the Risen Lord, the disciples went about telling the good news of God's victory over sin and death.**

*Exegesis of the Biblical References*

The influence of other gods introduced by the Babylonians during the time of exile competed with the influence of the God of Israel. This was a cause of struggle among the Israelites specially while in exile. Some Israelites began to doubt Yahweh's power and slowly turned towards other gods worshiped by their powerful captors. Second Isaiah, the prophet who was also among the exiles, became God's voice that strongly criticized and warned those who were unfaithful and idolatrous. God through Isaiah confronted the exiles by pointing out to them that these gods has not done anything at all for them. God reminded the Israelites that there is no other God like Yahweh who can save them from their captivity. God calls on the chosen people to become the witnesses to God's saving power.

After Jesus has risen, he appeared unexpectedly to his disciples for the third time while his disciples were in the boat fishing. The disciples did not recognize it was Jesus at first perhaps because it was early in the morning and Jesus was at a distance standing on the shore. When Jesus instructed them to cast the net on the right side of the boat and a large number of fish were caught, only then did they realize it was Jesus. Upon realizing it was Jesus, Peter jumped into the water and rushed to meet him. When the disciples came to the shore, Jesus invited them to have breakfast with him. After eating Jesus asked Peter three times "do you love me?" to which Peter answered three times also, "I love you" and every time Peter answered, Jesus would tell him, "feed my sheep." Jesus then revealed to Peter the task he needed to accomplish for the glory of God. Afterwards, Jesus invited him to "follow me."

Today, as believers respond to the invitation of Jesus to follow him, at times they encounter unexpected hurdles that may prevent them from recognizing the presence of Jesus. It is always ideal to listen well to the words of Jesus so we can always set our eyes on accomplishing the task entrusted to us. And when doubts, disappointments and discouragement seem to cloud our vision, our ears need to always hear his voice and discern his will for us so that we can be led back to him and to his mission. Just like the disciples who did not at first recognize Jesus and yet they threw their nets upon hearing his words, we too need to have a believing heart that Christ will always be there to he bless us and sustain us with what we need as we carry out the task of sharing and witnessing to the good news. And when we exhibit the same kind of trusting obedience as that of the disciples, we too may reap the same abundant blessings that they received from Jesus.

Witnessing for Jesus requires focus and attention because just like Peter who was asked three times by Jesus, we may encounter the same kind of questioning that would repeatedly challenge our sincerity and intention. We may even be confronted by strong reactions from those trying to resist and even oppose the kind of teaching and witnessing that we do in the name of Jesus. For we are representing a new set of values and perspectives, those that characterize life in the kingdom of God which run counter to and opposed to the dominant materialistic and individualistic values of this age. We need to be consistent with the kind of message we tell and the kind of love we render in our ministries. At times we may feel tired, frustrated or hurt when people seem to question our actions, yet we have to be prepared for Jesus has already told us that following him will always be painful, difficult and at times costly. But as followers of Jesus, we must be ready to give our life as we tell the world the good news that Christ has risen and that we can glorify God even more meaningfully through our faithful adherence to the teachings and examples lived by Jesus while he was on earth. Every day we are always called, and every day we are

expected to follow and obey in all faithfulness and trust in the power and grace of God in and through Jesus.

*Companion Guide for the Teachers and Other Users*

Unlike the mystery religions of the Greeks who kept the mysteries of the gods within the closed confines of the circle of believers, the early Christians received from the Lord the mandate to announce his resurrection to the whole world. They were to tell all people that Jesus has conquered death and that everyone is invited to share with him the power of resurrection. This was the church's instant message following their encounter with the risen Jesus.

The ancient Greeks were obsessed with the problem of death. Hades, or the abode of the dead awaits even the heroes who are not among the immortals of Mt. Olympus. The Greek mystery religions offer a way of salvation from mortality through a mystical experience with a god who descends from the immortal realm. On the other hand, the gospel tells the story of a flesh-and-blood person who was executed by the Romans as an enemy of the Empire. In Jesus they will find a savior whom God has awarded immortality for resisting the evil powers of the world. He is the true savior of those who suffered death for the sake of truth and justice. Jesus was speaking about them when he said, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for justice's sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:10) – that is, immortality in the mind of Gentiles.

This message threatened the guardians of the Empire more than the man himself, and sought to put an end to this "nonsense." It is likely the reason why most of the apostles, including Paul and many of the early Christians, suffered violent deaths courtesy of Rome. Many of those who survived were forced to renounce Jesus to escape being fed to wild animals or torched alive. As time passed, however, it appears that the essentially dangerous elements of the primitive gospel were suppressed, if not expurgated, as Christianity eventually joined the ranks of religions that gained imperial favor.

History may have done violence to the gospel but its primitive message has remained and is now the best kept secret of the church. Nevertheless, some Christian activists who may have despaired over the church's historical complicity to the genocide of native populations and other crimes under the regime of colonialism and neo-colonialism have found inspiration and hope in the rediscovery of the gospel's early message. The truth of Jesus will not be silenced forever for it is God's power to free the world from all forms of captivity.

## Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session and with the consistent example shown by parents and other significant adults, the children will be able to:

1. describe how Jesus appeared to his disciples by the seaside;
2. tell what Jesus prepared for his disciples, and
3. express joy when one is able to tell others about Jesus who is raised from the dead.

### II. Concept: The disciples tell others that Jesus is alive.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV), song chart, sandwich and a glass of milk, picture based on John 21:4-19, and memory verse placard

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Greet the children warmly as they arrive.
2. Opening prayer: Dear God, thank you for this day that we are again together to sing, pray, and listen to stories about Jesus and his friends. Thank you also for loving us. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.
3. Opening song: "Let's Tell Others" (Tune: "London Bridge is Falling Down")  
Our loving Jesus is alive, is alive, is alive  
Our loving Jesus is alive, let's tell others.  
Savior Jesus lives in us, lives in us, lives in us  
Savior Jesus lives in us, let's tell others.

#### B. Getting Ready

Prepare fish cutouts of different sizes that the children can decorate using indigenous materials available in your particular location.

#### C. Learning Time

Invite the children to listen to the story.

#### Helping the Disciples Catch Fish

(Based on John 21:4-19)

Peter and the other disciples miss Jesus. They begin to remember the things they did with Jesus. They start talking about these things.

Then Peter thinks he can go back to his old life before becoming a disciple. He decides, "I will go fishing."

The other disciples join him and say, "We will go with you."

The disciples fish all night. But they did not catch any fish.

Suddenly, there is a man on the shore looking at them. He shouts, "Friends, did you catch any fish?"

The disciples shout back, "No."

The man tells them, "Put your nets on the other side."

They did not recognize Jesus. But they agree to obey him.

One of the disciples, John, realizes that it is Jesus and he cries out, "It's the Lord!"

Hearing this, Peter runs to Jesus. The other disciples follow and drag their boat full of fish.

As soon as they are near Jesus, they notice that there is fire and some fish on it. Jesus then invites them to come and eat breakfast with him. After breakfast, Jesus asks Peter three times, "Do you love me?"  
"Yes, Lord."  
"Feed my sheep! Follow me!"  
Jesus wants Peter to serve and care for others.

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

Ask these questions.

1. Who was the man on the shore who helped the disciples catch fish? (Jesus)
2. How did they catch fish? (They obeyed what Jesus asked them to do and cast their nets on the other side of the lake.)
3. Who finally recognized Jesus? (John) What did he say? ("It's the Lord.")
4. Hearing this, what did Peter do? (He ran to meet Jesus.)
5. What did Jesus prepare for the disciples by the seaside? (Fire to broil fish)
6. How do you think Jesus and the disciples feel at that moment?
7. What did Jesus ask Peter? ("Do you love me?")
8. How did Peter answer Jesus? ("Yes, Lord!")
9. What did Jesus command Peter to do?
10. If Jesus asks you to serve and care for others, what will you say? Why?

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: What does Jesus want the disciples to tell about him?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Tell the class to get the fish cutouts that they have made. Ask them to write the names of the persons they have decided to serve and care for. Have them put together their fish cutouts to form a mobile.
2. Call on the children to explain why they chose those persons. Let them talk about the things that they can do. After they have shared their plans, tell them to say, "With Jesus Christ, I can do this!"
3. Ask they parade their mobiles, let them chant: "*Jesus is alive! It is God's victory over sin and death.*"

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Memory verse: "Follow me." (John 21:19b)
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "Alive, Alive Forevermore"  
Alive, alive, alive forevermore,  
My Jesus is alive, alive forevermore (twice).  
  
Sing hallelujah (twice),  
My Jesus is alive, alive forevermore.  
Sing hallelujah (twice),  
My Jesus is alive. (Repeat)
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, with joy in our hearts, we thank you for loving us. We promise to tell our friends that you raised Jesus, our Lord, from the dead. Amen."

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## Middle and Older Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. describe how Jesus appeared to his disciples by the seaside;
2. explain how Jesus is able to let his disciples know him;
3. infer what the disciples realized after Jesus prepared breakfast for them, and
4. demonstrate appreciation for Jesus who comes when he is needed.

### II. Concept: The disciples tell others that Jesus is alive.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV), activity sheet, crayons, song sheet, fish cutouts

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Smile and greet the children as they come. Check the attendance.
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, we will continue to talk about Jesus today, the Risen Lord. Pray that you will be with us once again through your Holy Spirit to teach us the ways of the Risen Lord. We pray in Christ's name. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Let's Talk about Jesus" (The Christian Hymnary)  
Let's talk about Jesus, the King of kings is he,  
The Risen Lord of lords, through all eternity,  
The great, I am the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Door,  
Let's talk about Jesus more and more.

#### B. Getting Ready

Prepare the class for the message relay game. Instruct the class with the following steps:

1. Form three rows of the same number of members.
2. Call the first child from each of the three lines.
3. Whisper a message to each of them and ask them to do the same to the person next in line.
4. Let the rest of the members relay the message to the person next to him or her until the message is relayed to all the members.
5. The last person in the row then shouts the message relayed.
6. All the groups that were able to say the message correctly are winners on accuracy. But the one that said it first correctly has a prize for speed.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Say: "Find out from this lesson the important message about Jesus that we have to tell others."
2. Before asking the class to read John 21:4-19 silently, give a background of the story first found in John 21:1-3. Emphasize the loneliness felt by the disciples and their decision to go back to their lives before they followed Jesus. Then let the learners read the verses responsively.
3. Divide the class into three groups and assign the following verses. Let them say the verses in their own words and be ready to share their work with the big group.

Group 1: John 21:4-8

Group 2: John 21:9-14

Group 3: John 21:15-19

*D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time*

1. Ask these questions.
  - a. What did Jesus do so that his disciples would know him? (Jesus helped them catch plenty of fish. Jesus ate with them.)
  - b. What do you think the disciples realized after Jesus prepared breakfast for them? (Jesus' words were true. Jesus was truly alive. Their experiences of miracles and meal fellowships with Jesus attested to this claim.)
2. Tell the class to use the same grouping and get ready to prepare a creative presentation like a skit/drama, pantomime, choral speech and others based on the verses assigned to each of them.
3. Have each group present their work before the class. Process the presentations and encourage the class to share their insights they have gleaned from the presentation.
4. Call on selected learners to sequence the events in the story.

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: "How would you tell others that Jesus is alive in you and comes to you in times of need?"

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Use the same grouping. This time ask each group to say an important lesson worth applying in their daily living and to list ways by which they can share the Good News to others. Let each group identify the persons they want to talk to and write their names in the fish cutouts given to them. Tell them to discuss how they are going to implement their plan of action.
2. Have each group present their work before the whole class. After each presentation, let them conclude their work by saying in unison: "With Jesus Christ, I can do this!"

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Memory verse: "Follow me." (John 21:19b)
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing" (HFJ # 174) and "Alive, Alive Forevermore"
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, with joy in our hearts, we thank you for loving us. We promise to tell our friends that you raised Jesus, our Lord, from the dead. Amen."

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## Youth Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. explain the circumstances surrounding the appearance of Jesus to his disciples by the seaside;
2. point out to the significance of the witnessing of the disciples about the victory of Jesus over death;
3. discuss the command of Jesus to Peter and its implications in the post resurrection mission of the disciples, and
4. express commitment to tell others about Jesus who is raised from the dead.

### II. Concept: The disciples of Jesus proclaim and witness the good News of God's victory over sin and death.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV), hymnal, activity sheet, song sheet

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, we will continue to talk about Jesus today, the Risen Lord. Be with us once again through the Holy Spirit to teach us how to live in the way Jesus lived in his lifetime and ministry. Help us also to deeply understand our roles as followers of the risen Lord in these critical times where the powers of sin and death prevail. We pray in Christ's name. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Yours is the Glory, Resurrected One" (HFJ#171)

#### B. Getting Ready

Inquire: "What is meant by the words proclaim and witness? How would you characterize one who proclaims and witnesses?" Say: "The word *witness* comes from the Greek word "marturia" which means martyrdom. Jesus' disciples proclaimed and witnessed to the good news of Jesus' victory over death even if it meant their persecution and even death. Many of them were martyrs of faith."

#### C. Learning Time

1. Tell the learners to read silently Isaiah 43:10-12 and John 21:4-19.
2. After the silent reading, emphasize that Isaiah 43:10-12 tells of Isaiah's prophetic words to the Israelites whom God chose to be witnesses of God. Ask: "What was God's people going to be/do? Who are they to be witnesses for? What were they to be witnesses of?"
3. For the Bible reading of John 21:4-19, form three groups and assign specific verses to each group. Remind the class that the objective of the activity is to explain the circumstances surrounding the appearance of Jesus by the seaside.  
Group 1: John 21:4-8  
Group 2: John 21:9-14  
Group 3: John 21:15-19
4. Instruct each group to summarize in their own words the highlights of each set of verses using the About/Point Chart.



<b>About/Point Chart</b>	
Proposed Title given by Group # : _____	
Author: John, one of the disciples of Jesus	
The bible reading is <b>ABOUT</b> the circumstances surrounding the appearance of Jesus to the disciples by the seaside.:	
The author's <b>POINTS</b> are:	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

**D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time**

1. Tell the different groups to be ready to present their work to the big group.
2. Ask the following questions:
  - a. What is the significance of the witnessing of the disciples about the victory of Jesus over death? (The witnessing of the disciples about the victory of Jesus over death proves their faith, obedience, and loyalty to the risen Lord.)
  - b. What can you say about the command of Jesus to Peter and its implications in the post resurrection mission of the disciples? (Jesus orders Peter to care and nurture the people whom Jesus loves. It implies boldness in the preaching and teaching of the good news of God's victory over sin and death; boldness that actually brought many of the disciples to suffering and death.)

**E. Discovering the Biblical Truth**

Ask: How can you proclaim and witness about the risen Lord?

**F. Applying the Biblical Truth**

Have the students make a list on the board of the activities they think of. Encourage them to use the following sample table.

<b>PROCLAIMING AND WITNESSING PLAN</b>			
Activity	Expected Outcome	Date/Place	Responsible Church workers/CYF officers
Ex. Youth Night "Resist the Forces of Sin and Death"	100 young people or more expressed commitment to say "NO" to the forces of sin and death at present like corruption, injustice, destructive mining, human rights violations and others.	Sixth Sunday after the resurrection / church or covered court	

**G. Closing Worship**

1. Offering
2. Closing song: "Yours is the Glory, Resurrected One" (HFJ#171)
3. Closing prayer/Statement of commitment: "We, young people, believe that the early Christians received from the Lord the mandate to announce his resurrection to the whole world and that they were to tell all people that he has conquered death, and that everyone is invited to share with him the power of resurrection; and the truth of Jesus will not be silenced forever for it is God's power to free the world from all forms of captivity. Today, we express commitment to proclaim and witness to God's victory over sin and death in words and in deeds. Amen."

## Adult Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. describe how Jesus appeared to his disciples by the seaside;
2. explain the significance of the witnessing of the disciples about the victory of Jesus over death;
3. make one's commitment in the proclaiming and witnessing mission as an application of Jesus' mandate to the disciples; and
4. express joy when one is able to tell others about Jesus who is raised from the dead.

### II. Concept: Having encountered the Risen Lord, the disciples went about telling the good news of God's victory over sin and death.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV), hymnal, activity sheet, song chart, notebook and pen

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "God of life, we invoke the presence and inspiration of your Holy Spirit to enlighten us even more that we may be able to live in the way Jesus lived in his lifetime and ministry. As followers of the risen Lord in these critical times, when the powers of sin and death prevail, we ask that you strengthen our firm resolve to walk the extra mile in our witness of the good news of your kingdom. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Yours is the Glory, Resurrected One" (HFJ#171)

#### B. Getting Ready

Inquire: "What is meant by the words proclaim and witness? How would you characterize one who proclaims and witnesses?" Say: "The word *witness* comes from the Greek word "marturia" which means martyrdom. Jesus' disciples proclaimed and witnessed to the good news of Jesus' victory over death even if it meant their persecution and even death. Many of them were martyrs of faith."

#### C. Learning Time

1. Tell the learners to read silently Isaiah 43:10-12 and John 21:4-19.
2. After the silent reading, emphasize that Isaiah 43:10-12 tells of Isaiah's prophetic words to the Israelites whom God chose to be witnesses of God. Ask: "What was God's people going to be/do? Who are they to be witnesses for? What were they to be witnesses of?"
3. In reading John 21:4-19, form three groups and assign specific verses to each group. Remind the class that the objective of the activity is to explain the circumstances surrounding the appearance of Jesus by the seaside.  
Group 1: John 21:4-8  
Group 2: John 21:9-14  
Group 3: John 21:15-19
4. Present on the board some blank thought bubbles. Tell the class to supply a sentence about being a follower of Jesus Christ given the following situations.
  - a. The things we give up
  - b. The ways we change in doing things for others
  - c. The truth that He is in charge and will provide for the things we really need

- d. The unavoidable circumstances when we do not do the right thing in order to survive
- e. The commitment to proclaim and witness in the midst of one’s hardship

**D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time**

1. Ask these questions and encourage the adults to share their insights and to answer some other questions raised.
  - a. What did Jesus prepare for the disciples at the seaside? (Jesus prepared a charcoal fire with fish on it, and also bread.)
  - b. What message do you think the miracle of fish catch, the preparation of the charcoal fire with fish on it, and bread try to tell the disciples? (That Jesus is truly alive, flesh and bones, and hungry, and that he is the same Jesus who cares for them.)
  - c. If the disciples encountered the risen Lord, could you say you too encountered the risen Lord? How?
  - d. What judgment would you make about those church workers and lay people victims of human rights violations and extra-judicial killings for exposing the evils of those in power and other forces of sin and death in society?
2. By way of conclusion, ask: “What conclusions can you draw from the discussion and sharing of insights?” (Sometimes following Jesus is hard and sometimes it is easy. Every Christian is expected to proclaim and witness to the Risen Lord.)

**E. Discovering the Biblical Truth**

Ask: “What way would you plan to proclaim and witness about the risen Lord?”

**F. Applying the Biblical Truth**

Make small groups and present this table. Ask each group to talk about it and be ready to share their work to the big group.

<b>PROCLAIMING AND WITNESSING PLAN</b>			
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Date/Place</b>	<b>Responsible Church workers</b>

**G. Closing Worship**

1. Offering
2. Closing song: “We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations” (HFJ 310)
3. Closing prayer/Statement of commitment: “We believe that the early Christians received from the Lord the mandate to announce his resurrection to the whole world and that they were to tell all people that he has conquered death, and that everyone is invited to share with him the power of resurrection; and the truth of Jesus will not be silenced forever for it is God’s power to free the world from all forms of captivity. Today, we express commitment to proclaim and witness to God’s victory over sin and death in words and in deeds. Amen.”