Q1. (Faith) St Peter stirred a controversy among Jewish Christians when baptized Gentiles into the faith. We will continue to see this controversy in the remainder of Acts. He also stirred a controversy which exists to this day, salvation by faith and works. How do the words of St Peter support the Church’s teaching on the necessity of faith and works for salvation?

Acts 10:34-35

34 Then Peter proceeded to speak and said, “In truth, I see that God shows no partiality.

35 Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him.

CCC1826

"If I…have not charity," says the Apostle, "I am nothing." Whatever my privilege, service, or even virtue, "if I…have not charity, I gain nothing." Charity is superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues: "So faith, hope, charity abide, these three. But the greatest of these is charity."

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The practice of all the virtues is animated and inspired by charity, which "binds everything together in perfect harmony"; it is the form of the virtues; it articulates and orders them among themselves; it is the source and the goal of their Christian practice. Charity upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love.

Q2. (Hope) Put yourself in the shoes of Gentile who believes in God, such as Cornelius. How would your hope of salvation be lifted by the words of St. Peter, and even more by the resulting effects?

Acts 10:42-44

42 He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.

43 To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

44 While Peter was still speaking these things, the holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the word.

Q3. (Love) What acts of charity do you see being performed by the characters in today’s lesson?

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Peter affirms the necessity of both faith and works of charity for salvation. As he echoes the words of Christ, his words are echoed by St Paul and by the teaching of the Church.

John 14:12

Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do

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Although believers in the One , True, God worshipped by the Jews, as Gentiles, they were excluded from acceptance and worship. At the direction of God, Peter fully opens the door of salvation to all the faithful who live their faith in daily practice. The hope of salvation, which appeared closed to them, had suddenly been opened to full acceptance and worship of God. No longer were they to be treated differently.

A3. (Love) What acts of charity do you see being performed by the characters in today’s lesson?

8:36 Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated means Dorcas). She was completely occupied with good deeds and almsgiving.

8:37 Now during those days she fell sick and died, so after washing her, they laid [her] out in a room upstairs.

8:38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, “Please come to us without delay.”

8:39 So Peter got up and went with them

8:39 All the widows came to him weeping and showing him the tunics and cloaks that Dorcas had made while she was with them

8:40 Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to her body and said, “Tabitha, rise up.” She opened her eyes, saw Peter, and sat up

10:2 [Cornelius] devout and God-fearing along with his whole household, who used to give alms generously to the Jewish people and pray to God constantly.

10:4 [Cornelius] “Your prayers and almsgiving have ascended as a memorial offering before God.

10:9 Peter went up to the roof terrace to pray at about noontime

10:21 Then Peter went down to the men and said, “I am the one you are looking for.

10:22 They answered, “Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, respected by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to summon you to his house and to hear what you have to say.”

10:23 [Peter] invited them in and showed them hospitality

10:23 The next day he got up and went with them

10:24 Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends

10:28-29 God has shown me that I should not call any person profane or unclean. 29 And that is why I came without objection when sent for

10:31 ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your almsgiving remembered before God.

10:32 He is a guest in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.’

10:33 So I sent for you immediately, and you were kind enough to come

10:33 we are all here in the presence of God to listen to all that you have been commanded by the Lord

10:48 He ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

10:49 Then they invited him to stay for a few days.