

Third Sunday of Easter



Easter is not simply a day to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection, but a season that lasts 50 days and invites us to enter into the fullness of God's mystery. We put our faith in a Higher Power that has been raised from the dead, glorified, and resurrected. This has nothing to do with ghosts, mythology, wish-fulfillment, or disembodied spirits. It is much more than an abstraction of good will, kindness, and respect.

Our recovery from the family spiritual disease of addiction requires engagement with more than a ghost. Like the disciples encountering Jesus after the Resurrection, we get support from God who dwells among us today. We get a personal encounter with Jesus by relying on others, the body of Christ living and breathing in the world. We get direct contact with our Lord through the sacraments that heal and nourish us along the way.

We have an Advocate above, continually knitting the fabric of heaven and earth together. In recovery, we rely on the body of Christ in order to turn away from destructive reactions and attitudes and, instead, devote ourselves to spiritual progress. Along the way, we begin to truly love God with all our heart, mind and soul.

As Easter people, we rejoice in our risen Lord but shall not forget the pain and sacrifice experienced by Jesus for the sake of our own resurrection and freedom from death. As we commit to a program of recovery, one day or moment at a time, it is common to acknowledge the pain that addiction has brought us over many years—oftentimes in the form of mental, emotional, and spiritual anguish.

In many cases, we have been conditioned to avoid small moments of suffering by grabbing for control, taking on fearful attitudes, and isolating ourselves from the world outside. Addiction takes hold of the family when our actions and identities within the family begin shifting to conform to the addiction. Fear drives most of this behavior. Acting against the grain of our fear is a difficult but necessary part in trusting that God will restore us to sanity.

We can see similar transformations take place in the lives of the disciples, particularly noting the new life within them after the Resurrection of our Lord. Peter wanted a Christ without the cross and denied Him three times before His death. When Jesus returned, Peter had an amends to make:

*When they had finished breakfast,
 Jesus said to Simon Peter,
 "Simon, son of John,
 do you love me more than these?"
 Simon Peter answered him,
 "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."
 Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."
 He then said to Simon Peter a second time,
 "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"
 Simon Peter answered him,
 "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."
 Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep."
 Jesus said to him the third time,
 "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"
 Peter was distressed that Jesus had said to him a
 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.*

We see the fruit of Peter's recovery when he is face-to-face with the same authorities who had previously frightened him to betray Jesus. Emboldened by a second chance to love and serve his Lord, Peter accepts his mission and shares the good news with others, regardless of the cost. "We must obey God rather than men," Peter proclaims in this Sunday's First Reading. By choosing to face the truth and accepting the path ahead of us, we are given a similar opportunity to tend the flock of Jesus and align ourselves with God's will.

Reflection Questions

- How have you acted against the grain of your fear to make progress along your personal recovery journey?
 - Share with the group some practical ways you have let go of fear during a moment of chaos.
- What second chances has Jesus given you?
- How are you making progress?

Daily Scripture Reading & Rosary Group

*Get your day started with a new 11th Step meeting
 that gathers every day at 8a ET/7a CT:*

- Group begins by reading daily Catholic Scripture readings and spending time in quiet prayer
- Time for brief fellowship and reflection sharing
- Rosary begins about a half hour into the meeting
- Meeting info at www.catholicinrecovery.com/virtual-meeting-schedule/

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

1st Reading: Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13

2nd Reading: Revelation 5:11-14

Gospel: John 21:1-19