

Easter 3rd Sunday: “**Lord, you know that I love you**”

Today’s Gospel narrative tells us the *rehabilitation of Peter, who denied Jesus three times in the courtyard of Caiaphas, repented, and then received Primacy in the Church from Jesus*. The Gospel also shows us that *God is in search of man, even when man tries to evade Him*

In the first part of today’s Gospel, the risen Jesus appears to His disciples and gives them a symbol of their mission in a miraculous catch of fish, followed by a grilled fish breakfast prepared by Jesus himself. Jesus does this tender gesture, with his maternal solicitude. Can’t we see a perfect example of a servant/steward-leadership here? Why? *The Reasons?*

-They were aware that they abandoned him when he needed them most, during his passion. They were naturally ashamed to face him again! Jesus takes the *approach of forgiveness* and reinstates them into his friendship again.

- He does this by reaching out and helping them in their time of need. Fruitless work during the whole night, without a single catch of fish. Why? =he made them *fishers of men*. Once Jesus is gone, despite his call and mandate, they turned back into their old jobs that ends up in total failure.

The second part we see, Peter being forgiven by the Lord for denying him three times. We can imagine Peter’s dismay, when Jesus asked “Do you love me” x3. -*as if in reparation for his triple denial of Jesus*. “*Lord, you know everything*”. Jesus knows that Peter's loyalty is really very strong, and so he gives him this moving and deeply emotional opportunity to reverse his denials and profess and confirm his love and support for him.

*Peter, as a forgiven sinner, is chosen for the **quality of his love** to serve as leader in the community. As his primary mission, Peter is given the care of the vulnerable lambs and sheep. It certainly makes you think, if we were to do things the human way, then the best leader for the group of disciples would hardly have been a man who denied Christ three times when he needed him most.*

If we were looking around for people to lead and care for God's people and only used human standards, these people and many others would have been written off as failed, weak and unreliable. But God does not think as we think. God sees into the human heart. God sees what we are capable of, and He knows that we need forgiveness and a new start in order, not to be blocked in our old ways.

Today we celebrate parish **stewardship day**, with evening dinner for *volunteer appreciation*. We have an example of care and service, in Jesus preparing breakfast for his evading disciples. *Peter's denial did not disqualify him from following Jesus or serving him.* Rather, they served as lesions of humility and prepared him for the mission, even up to his martyrdom. (Today's *first reading*) We all fall short from time to time, as we try to follow the Lord. Our weaknesses may hinder us from loving and serving the Lord. But nothing disqualifies us from our call to be his disciples. Like Peter, we can learn from our failures and humbly return to the Lord to serve our brethren with greater confidence.

Our God knows that mercy and trust help to set people back on the right path and to do the things God calls them to do, things that they would never be able to do on their own! Therefore, we have no reason to stay indifferent or intimidated but come into the merciful love of Jesus to be in the light, to serve him and his people with renewed joy and greater enthusiasm. Amen