

Third Sunday of Easter - 2019 -- C
Acts 5.27-32,40-41//Rev. 5.11-14//John 21.1-19

→a story is told about a priest, who on a perfectly beautiful Sunday morning, couldn't resist the urge to go fishing

→so he called up the bishop and with a fake raspy voice...he told the bishop he was too sick to say the morning Masses, and would the bishop send a substitute to cover for him?

→so the bishop did...and off the priest went to fish...

→well the first catch of the priest was the biggest fish he had ever landed...and upon seeing this, St. Peter up in heaven turned to Jesus and said, "after what he did, why did reward that priest with such a huge fish?"

→to which Jesus smiled and said.... "actually I am teaching him a lesson....after running out on his responsibilities as he did this morning, who can he tell about his catch!!"

→I think that story and today's gospel episode have a lot in common....because both stories in a certain sense are about honesty and sincerity...especially when it comes to our faith....

→today we hear about Jesus meeting up with his disciples yet another time....

→.....the apostles are out all night working feverishly tossing their nets out into the sea with nothing to show for it....and after a night of exhaustion and frustration....Jesus tells them to cast their nets one more time in to the sea.

→this time.....the catch of fish is bigger than they can handle and after coming ashore

→then we hear this interesting conversation between Jesus and Peter....

→I have always found it ironic that Jesus asks Peter...about his faith...and his love: three times.... the same number of times that Peter denied knowing Jesus....

→and in each instance Peter responds “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you,” to which Jesus responds.... “feed my lambs, tend my sheep, feed my people”

PAUSE

→[I believe]//...//.....the lesson for us today is about the honesty and sincerity and depth of our faith....

→that is why Jesus questions Peter 3 different times about his love for him....and perhaps it is also a question that Jesus is maybe asking you and me today as well.

→and maybe how we answer that is something that we might we need to consider for ourselves as we live life in this day and age.

PAUSE

--it is interesting to note that up to this point...when it came their faith....their true and sincere belief in Jesus.....

----- the disciples.....[as we often see]....kind of just float along without actually knowing, or realizing or being aware of what was actually going on...or what was expected of them

-----if you recall, the apostles....never really understood completely anything that Jesus did,

→and often.....when he did do something they were usually astonished or dumbfounded or they argued among themselves or asked a lot of questions.

→BUT, today in the gospel, and in 1st reading, things seem to be coming together ///and falling into place for the disciples/////

→ in a word, Jesus asks them if they really and truly believe....and maybe we are being asked the very same thing today.

PAUSE

→as we hear in the first reading from Acts.....

→Peter and the disciples are now willing to endure any hardship in order to bring the Good News to the people who had never met Jesus

“the Sanhedrin orders the apostles to stop speaking in the name of Jesus....and how do they respond..... “we must obey God and witness to the message of Jesus Christ.”

---THAT IS A VERY BIG DIFFERENCE FROM THIS SAME GROUP
THAT WAS RUNNING SCARED just a few weeks ago

----and then in the Gospel, we hear about a very confident, and secure Peter.....as opposed to the person that would not allow Jesus to wash his feet and denied him 3 times

----because of his faith.....Peter [and for that matter....all the disciples] are no longer just coasting along///for them their faith has become very real and important

AND THE SAME.....NEEDS TO BE TRUE FOR YOU AND ME

→I am sure, [at times] all of us have been very much like the disciples, in some way or another.....we have coasted along when it comes to our faith....our relationship with Godwith one another....and maybe even...with the Church

-----we live in a world today that unfortunately doesn't want to accept and encourage faith as something that is important

→ how many people today look at responsibilities, or obligations, or duties as something that is superficial or arbitrary

PAUSE

→I think the message for us today is that we need to follow the lead of the disciples, and realize that BECAUSE OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, because of God's love and mercy.....because of God's blessing and goodness to us.....that when it comes to faith...when it comes to professing and standing up for what we believe.....we cannot just continue to coast

→our faith...and the practice of it can't just be a minimal or insignificant part of our who we are

PAUSE

→the resurrection challenges us to have conviction, and meaning, and value behind..... what we profess...what we believe...what our faith is

---and to nurture this conviction, to discover more deeply this meaning, and to strengthen the values of our faith

-----we must.....grow in our knowledge of Jesus Christ

We must....be more attentive to his presence in our lives

We must....live as witnesses to his message and presence

....and we must develop a real, authentic and sincere relationship with Christ.

→in simple terms...we must.....practice and live what we believe....and in today's world...with all that is going on...THAT is becoming all the more challenging and difficult to do each and every day

PAUSE

→[you see]....it is very easy and convenient to remain status quo

.....to coast along...to be uninvolved, detached or removed from the demands of our life...the demands of our beliefs

----however, our challenge before us today **IS** to make our faith alive, to make it a real and sincere, and authentic.....part of our lives.....PAUSE

----our Lord is inviting each of us to do **JUST** that... rather than running away in order to go fishing

→...the resurrection of the Jesus, proved to be the turning point for the disciples

→for them, the resurrection made everything real and authentic.....it all came together and made sense

→**AND THE SAME SHOULD BE TRUE FOR YOU AND ME**