

(Food for thought)

Tending Sheep



The resurrection appearances of Jesus are filled with surprises and mystifying details. His friends do not recognize Him; He appears through locked doors; He has broken out of a tomb, but carries the wounds of His dying. He speaks of peace and forgiveness. He promises the gift of His Spirit. He sends His disciples to change the world.

In the Scriptures, every Resurrection appearance story is accompanied by a mandate, a call - a challenge to commitment. Through his death and resurrection, Christ is asking if we are willing to carry on in the "real world" of human beings, according to his teachings, his understanding of God, his love for people.

Each of us has been called to witness to Christ's call to Life. Each of us has been sent to feed one other - to nourish and be nourished through community. We are each challenged to proclaim to the world that our God is a God who takes life with absolute seriousness, a God who enters fully

into suffering and death and does not allow it the final victory. We do this just by living our daily lives as best we can: by raising our children, by teaching, listening, comforting and encouraging others, guiding and defending life.

Today's Gospel is a wonderful lesson for each of us, struggling with our own very personal efforts to love Jesus and to be faithful to Him. We are so often slow to understand, eager to deny, strong on words and weak on action, afraid to pay the price of discipleship, but always hanging in, and always knowing that Jesus will walk with us, forgive us, heal us, and wait patiently for us to mature in our faith and our love - waiting for us to reach the point when we can say with Peter: "Lord, you know that I love You."

And Jesus will smile back at us, and say, "Follow me." And we will follow. And the Risen Lord will be very much with us, to help us understand, to supply answers to our deepest questions and fears, and to reveal Himself again to us in the Breaking of the Bread.

