

May 01, 2022
3rd Sunday of Easter
Acts 5:27-32,40b-41
Ps 30:2,4,5-6,11-12,13
Rev 5:11-14
John 21:1-19

MEETING US WHERE WE ARE AT!

Where are you now in your faith-life journey? Are you feeling stressed out? Is your relationship with family members falling apart? Do you feel that life is not treating you well? Are you feeling abandoned by God? Are you troubled with the uncertainty of the future? How about closeness to him? Can you recall an instance where you felt his tremendous love for you? Where are you now in your faith-life journey, in your relationship with Jesus?

The reality of our faith-life journey is that it is a journey of 'ups and downs;' 'valleys and plains;' 'joys and sorrows;' 'successes and failures.' No matter where we are at in our faith-life journey what is certain is that the Lord Jesus, the Risen One, will meet us there. This is what he did with Simon Peter and the other disciples in the gospel proclaimed - **he met them where they were at in their faith-life journey.**

Where were they at in their faith-life journey during that time? Simon Peter and the other disciples were obviously discouraged by the tragic death of the Lord Jesus. Going back home and trying to resume their work as fishermen was their way of coping with the uncertainty of the future. It was at that moment of their journey filled with uncertainty and discouragement that the Lord Jesus engaged/met them. At first, the disciples did not recognize the Lord Jesus. The gospel says that they did not realize who the person was. Nonetheless, as the interaction deepened their eyes were opened, saying: **"It is the Lord."**

The place of encounter between the Lord Jesus and his disciples was along the shore. This was very significant. Remember, it was here that the first call – **"Follow me."** happened. It was here that they were called to be fishers of men. It was here that they made a radical decision to leave everything behind and follow Jesus. It was here that they were restored from their brokenness. It was here that they shifted their focus from earthly concerns to heavenly affairs!

In our faith-life journey, **can we recall where and when we first heard the call of the Lord Jesus saying: Follow me? What was our response when we heard it?**

The gospel proclaimed says that after they finished eating breakfast the Lord Jesus directed himself to Simon Peter. In the ensuing dialogue the Lord Jesus asked Simon Peter three (3x) times in front of the other disciples regarding his love and loyalty to him. It must have been hard for Simon Peter to answer the Lord Jesus' questions. **Why?** It was hard for him to answer the questions because of shame, pain and sorrow caused by his public denial of the Lord Jesus. Through the grace of God, Simon Peter was able to gather his strength and answer the questions with remorse and humility. In this encounter Simon Peter's relationship with the Lord Jesus was restored and the mission to be fisher of men was reinstated.

In our faith-life journey, the Lord Jesus longs for our loyalty and love. He is always reaching out to us to restore our relationship with him. He is always there reminding us of our mission to make others his disciples. Like Simon Peter, after showing remorse and humility, **are we willing to serve the Lord Jesus whatever it might cost us? Are we willing to give our radical YES to him?**

In every Eucharistic celebration we have here, this place becomes a place of encounter between the Lord Jesus and us, his people. This place becomes our 'shore' wherein the Lord Jesus asks us: **Do you love me?** This place becomes our 'shore' wherein the Lord Jesus reminds us of our mission to be fishers of men. This place becomes our 'shore' wherein the Lord Jesus calls us again and again to follow him. Here in this place, he encounters us where we are at. He will not say to us: **"I will encounter you at Mass when you are okay. If not, I will not."** NO! The Lord Jesus is not like that. He is always willing and ready to meet us whether everything is okay or not in us. What is important though is our disposition for the encounter. Openness and humility must be our disposition. With these attitudes, we can start or re-start our mission to be fishers of men like Simon Peter.

As we continue our Easter journey, let us pray for each other to have the courage and strength to encounter the Lord Jesus regularly here in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. May our meeting with him here, not only restore, but deepen our relationship with him so we can wholeheartedly say: **"Yes, Lord, I will follow you until the end!"**

God bless our Easter journey!