

### 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER

In today's gospel reading, we continue to read about Jesus' appearances to his disciples after the resurrection.

In the gospel of John, this is the third and last appearance of Jesus after his resurrection.

Losing Jesus constant physical presence, the seven disciples of Jesus become discouraged and decide to return to their old way of life—fishing.

The gospel describes a situation of a sleepless night, hard work, and unsuccessful attempts and efforts of the disciples bringing no results.

To this situation, the risen Lord makes himself present and then everything is transformed.

So a new attempt of the disciples bears fruit and their efforts are rewarded with a bountiful catch.

The point is that the risen Lord brings a new meaning to the lives of the disciples. He gives them courage to start anew.

This and the grace of the Holy Spirit urge them to boldly witness to the resurrection as we see them do in today's first reading.

To keep the disciples from preaching about Jesus, the Jewish authorities have the disciples jailed. But an angel of God secretly releases them during the night, and orders them to resume their preaching in the temple area.

After their second arrest in today's first reading, Peter leads the disciples to disobey the Sanhedrin.

Peter insists, they must "obey God rather than men."

As we read from today's gospel reading after Peter's triple profession of love for Jesus, Jesus reaffirms him as a disciple with a responsibility as a shepherd of Jesus' flock.

Despite the threats from the authorities the disciples are not afraid to witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

In our lives, we sometimes face discouragements, situations of sleepless nights, hard work, unsuccessful attempts and efforts which bring little or no results.

In such situations we should not be afraid. We what should do is to turn to the Lord and welcome him into our lives and he may give us the courage to start anew. He will transform our fears into boldness and courage just as he transformed the fears of his disciples for them to become bold witnesses of his resurrection.

The point I am putting across is that as Christians, fears, disappointments and temptations threaten our faith in Christ. When this happens, we feel persuaded to go back to our old way of life.

We gradually loose the joy that Christian faith brings into our hearts, and we either abandon it or choose to remain Christians only in name.

But it is then, when moved by love and concern for us, the risen Lord comes to our aid. He gives us the grace of the Holy Spirit to help us to take courage in order not to allow our fears, disappointments and weaknesses to control us and determine our decisions and even rule our lives.

Let us remember that Easter and for that matter the Resurrection of the Lord means that the limitations of this finite world have been overcome and for the Christian there is always room for God's interventions.

As we gather around the altar of the Lamb who was slain to give him praise, honor and glory may he give us grace and determination to make each day better than yesterday, and that we might be ever more joyful, loving and passionate witnesses of his resurrection story.