

DEACON TONY'S APRIL 14, 2024 HOMILY
FOR THE
3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Peace be with you! What a relief for the Apostles to hear Our Lord's wonderful greeting.

There were things Jesus could have said like, where were you when I needed you? Why did you abandon me?

These were the men that Jesus was counting on to continue His Church when He left this world. He demonstrated the forgiving attitude they would have to have in order to evangelize others.

The Apostles were troubled and full of questions that required answers. He assured them that the answers were found in the Scriptures, the laws given to Moses, and the prophet's revelations. But that is not enough. An Apostle must not only know of the Savior but to know the Savior. How does that happen.

Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, the promise of a Messiah is clearly given. These messianic prophecies were made hundreds, sometimes thousands of years before Jesus Christ was born, and clearly Jesus Christ is the only person who has ever walked this earth to fulfill them. In fact, from Genesis to Malachi, there are over 300 specific prophecies detailing the coming of this Anointed One. In addition to prophecies detailing His virgin birth, His birth in Bethlehem, His birth from the tribe of Judah, His lineage from King David, His sinless life, and His atoning work for the sins of His people, the death and resurrection of the Jewish Messiah was, likewise, well documented in the Hebrew prophetic Scriptures long before the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ occurred in history.

In the reading from Acts, we hear from Peter, the first Pope, that faith goes back to the early Fathers of the Church. Many times, God had to intervene in order to wipe away the sins of His people, who had put "things" ahead of God. We are always called to turn back, as God heals and forgives our transgressions.

"Father forgive them for they know not what they are doing".

God may not be asking us to give up our lives, but our life styles.

The last thing that Luke mentions in this Gospel is: "YOU ARE WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS" AS PERTAINING THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF Our Lord and Savior,

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My children, I am writing this to you so that you may not commit sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one. He is expiation for our sins, and not for our sins only but for those of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

Thus, it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that *repentance, for the forgiveness of sins*, would be preached in his name to all the nations... (Luke 24:46-47)

YOU ARE WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS!

Seeing is believing, so if I don't see it then I don't believe it.

Rather: believing is seeing!

SO HOW ARE WE TO KNOW HOW TO BE A WITNESS FOR CHRIST?

Participate in:

- RECONCILIATION when we know God's forgiveness. SO, THERE ARE NO THINGS BLOCKING OUR PATH TO JESUS.
- SACRED BODY AND BLOOD as we partake in the Sacrifice of the Mass.
- HAVING A SPOUSE AND CHILDREN TO WITNESS TO AND GROW WITH.
- HAVING A FAITH FAMILY TO SHARE WITH. A PLACE TO INVITE A FRIEND TO.
- BIBLE STUDIES TO ALLOW US TO GROW CLOSER TO OUR LORD.
- ADORATION – A PLACE TO RELAX IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD.
- RELIGIOUS CLASSES FOR YOUR CHILDREN TO LEARN FROM.

YOU ARE WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS!