

HANDOUTS: Week Eight

God's Love and Our Response

A Dramatic Shift:

From intense sorrow – to overpowering joy...

From sadness – to relief and awe...

Ask for Grace.

God has to give it to us.

And we need to ask for it.

We can't make it happen.

And God absolutely wants to share the grace with us, *if we are able to receive it.*

Why wouldn't I be able to receive the grace of joy at the Resurrection?

Authentic joy can be complicated.

On the road to Emmaus, they don't immediately recognize Jesus.

Mary Magdalene has the same issue.

Peter and John see the empty tomb and don't really understand.

Even all of the Disciples doubt – with Jesus standing among them!

It takes time for the grace of the Resurrection to sink in.

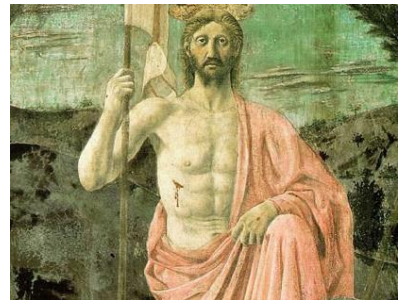
Maybe it's because Jesus is different – and yet the same.

He isn't reanimated like Lazarus.

He is resurrected. A New Creation.

He has been transformed.

The marks on his hands and his feet and his side remain.



The Resurrection doesn't mean that the suffering, crucifixion and death didn't happen.

The marks of torture are forever a part of Jesus' story.

Suffering and death are forever a part of our story, too.

Our eventual Resurrection of the Body,

Our personal experience someday of total encounter with Jesus,

Cannot happen without our journey in this life

And from this life to the next.

Resurrection means embracing the entirety of our human experience

The grace of sharing with Jesus the glory and joy of the Resurrection is no simple ask.

The salvation of Christ must embrace ALL of us, including – and especially – the reality of our sin and our suffering.

This is deeper.

It's not simply the pleasurable shallow feelings that we might sometimes mistake for lasting joy – those go away.

This is deep, and it can only come about with the entirety of our life experience.

And so we begin each prayer period by *asking* for the grace of the day...

...and then be open.

God will not force His grace upon us.

Be open to the extraordinary gifts that God wants to offer each of us.

What does it mean to experience the Risen Jesus?

1. The Resurrection isn't simply a moment in time, two thousand years ago.
The Resurrection is a present reality, and is OUR reality as Christians.
The same Jesus who exited the tomb is the One who is present
in our lives and faith,
in the Scriptures,
in the community of believers,
and especially in the sacraments.
THAT Jesus on Easter morning is OUR Jesus.
2. Death no longer has power over us.
It can be hard to believe that!
We know that what is to come means suffering and even death-
But that can take on new meaning and even bring us hope.
3. The Resurrection affirms the value of each human person and all of creation.
Jesus did not lose his humanity in the Resurrection.
God has forever embraced created humanity as a part of himself!
Each person is valuable.
All creation is precious because God has forever united it to himself.

Culmination of the Retreat

We reflect on four aspects of the Contemplation of the Love of God:

Thanking God for so many gifts;

Finding God in all things, in all people, and in myself;

Praising God who constantly *labors* for me;

And *praising* God, who is the *source* of all goodness.

Savor the many graces that God has offered to you!

We remember our prayer for spiritual indifference in our lives – that holy desire to become free from the disordered attractions that we all have.

As we contemplate God’s love – and ultimately try to emulate it and live it in our lives – now we see why freedom is so essential.

We want to be able to give our whole selves over to Him.

**Take Lord, receive all my liberty, my memory,
my understanding and all my will –
all that I have and possess.**

To experience the depths of the love of God,

We get to know God,

We get to know ourselves,

And then we have that experience of

“Encountering the God Who Loves You.”

