

Third Sunday of Easter
Homily of Bishop Barres
Our Lady of Loretto
April 18, 2021

It is a joy, as your Diocesan Bishop and Successor to the Apostles, to be with Bishop Luis Romero, our Vicar of Hispanic Ministry and Evangelization, and all of our young adults here at Our Lady of Loretto parish as we rejoice together in the power of the Risen Lord and his love for our missionary Church.

I am grateful to all of you for your pioneering and innovative work in regard to our new web portal *CFN Espanol*. You, our young adults, are providing creative programming that reaches other young adults and people of all ages and inspires them to love the Risen Jesus and to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit in their lives. *Que viva CFN Espanol!*

We celebrate tonight your families and their histories and their beautiful and heart-felt Catholic faith brought to the United States from El Salvador, República Dominicana, Colombia, Guatemala, Ecuador, Perú, Chile, Honduras, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Panamá, Cuba, Costa Rica, Paraguay, Uruguay, Puerto Rico and México.

Your family's faith and your own vibrant Catholic faith as a young adult enriches and helps to lead and animate the global missionary spirit of the Catholic Church in the United States.

Let the Risen Christ lead and guide you!

One of our young adults from Our Holy Redeemer parish in Freeport Jennifer Espinal told me what she says to all of you her peers: "Don't trade your Catholic dream for the American dream!"

Don't trade your love for the Risen Christ and the mission of mercy of his Church for American consumerism which falsely equates your self-worth with your net worth!

Don't trade your love for the Risen Christ and the mission of mercy of his Church for the superficial American celebrity culture that makes an idol of celebrity, power, pleasure, status, superficiality and self-destruction.

In this Year of St. Joseph, go to St. Joseph the Worker for his help! Allow your work and the management of your career to be holy, just and excellent.

Respect the Sunday Sabbath and the need for enriching family leisure which only helps to strengthen and focus our work during the week.

Don't make your work an idol, an idol that destroys your marriages and hurts your children. Ask St. Joseph the Worker to intercede for you. Ask St. Joseph the Worker to help you find the right work and career path that you are called to.

Ask St. Joseph the Worker and Guardian of the Holy Family and the Guardian of your family to be a holy husband, a holy wife, a holy mother, a holy father, a holy aunt, a holy uncle, a holy cousin (as Mary was to Elizabeth).

Remember the words of our Holy Father Pope Francis: "Marriages and families transform the world and history."

Your marriage, your family, your daily work transforms the world and history with the love of the Risen Christ.

Allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify your work and to sanctify your families because they are so deeply connected and need to be carefully balanced with wisdom and prudence.

Let the inspired Sacred Scriptures and the Body and Blood of Christ form and flow through your family and through your daily work.

In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis states: "Christ's resurrection is not an event of the past; it contains a vital power which has permeated the world. Where all seems to be dead, signs of the resurrection suddenly spring up. It is

an irresistible force...Each day in our world beauty is born anew, it rises transformed through the storms of history...Such is the power of the resurrection, and all who evangelize are instruments of that power.” (276)

Think for a moment of every Gospel Empty Tomb experience and Resurrection appearance that we pray and celebrate this Easter season. They rekindle our hope in a world that seems at time very dark. They rekindle our fire to be missionary disciples of mercy to the world. Young adults: After all the trials and challenges of the pandemic, let the Risen Christ rekindle your hope and the boldness of your Catholic faith!

Think of Luke 24 and the two men in dazzling garments saying to the women before the empty tomb: “Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but he has been raised.”

Think of John 20 and Mary Magdala discovering the empty tomb in the dark – her running to tell Simon Peter and John and in turn John and Peter running to the tomb in hope and expectation. Young adults: run with world track record speed with Peter and John to the Empty Tomb and the Risen Christ! Entrust your future with humble confidence to the Risen Christ! If you are feeling any fear or insecurity, go with confidence to the Risen Christ!

Think of Jesus addressing Thomas in John 20: “Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.”

And then we hear Thomas’ emotional profession of faith that rings and echoes through the centuries: “My Lord and my God!” And our Lord appeals to us: “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.” Young adults: give your life to the Risen Christ and proclaim with Thomas “My Lord and my God!”

Think of the Resurrected Christ in John 21 appearing to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias after a frustrating night of fishing. The Risen Lord says very simply: “Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something.” Young adults: cast the nets of your Catholic faith everywhere you

go – in your family, among your friends, at your workplace, at the soccer field, in the local 7-11 and at Jones Beach!

That “something” the disciples find is a miraculous catch of fish, followed by a breakfast of bread and fish cooked on a charcoal fire. This passage concludes with him asking Simon Peter three times: “Simon, Son of John, do you love me?” – an experience of mercy and forgiveness for Peter as it echoed and paralleled his three fold denial of the Lord. Young adults: be faithful to the Sacrament of Penance and be an ambassador of the Divine Mercy and an ambassador of forgiveness to the world! Give total amnesty to anyone who has ever hurt you, wounded you or humiliated you.

Think of the two disciples in Luke 24 who meet Jesus on the Road to Emmaus and whose hearts burn with the Risen Lord’s explanation of the fulfillment of the Scriptures and who recognize him at the breaking of the bread.

We hear in today’s Gospel what happens immediately after the Road to Emmaus “and how Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.” Young adults: make your lives burn with the Sacred Scriptures and burn with the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ!

Jesus is not a ghost. His is a bodily and true Resurrection from the Dead. Our Lord’s Resurrection is the foundation stone of all our faith. The Risen Lord shows the disciples his hands and his feet and they are filled with joy and amazement. To emphasize the point of his bodily resurrection he eats a piece of baked fish.

Think of the description of St. Paul’s encounter with the Risen Lord in the 22nd Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and the words of Jesus to him: “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me...I am Jesus the Nazorean whom you are persecuting.” It is the Risen Lord who transforms Saul the Christian persecutor into Paul the unstoppable, intrepid missionary. Young adults: with Paul, ask for a deep life-changing encounter and conversion with the Risen Christ!

Every one of these descriptions of the Empty Tomb experiences of the disciples or the Resurrection appearances of Jesus is an expression of the Mercy of the Risen Christ.

Fear and locked doors surrender to love and bold witness to the Risen Christ. Christ's merciful grace streams cosmically from inside each one of his Glorified Wounds out to the World.

The Risen Christ's glorified wounds touch and heal our wounds, the wounds we have experienced in our families, the wounds we have experienced at work and the wounds we have experienced in life.

The Risen Christ's glorified wounds touch and heal our wounds and help us, as we discern and forge our way in life as young adult Catholics, to touch and help to heal the wounds of the world.