

# Third Sunday OF EASTER



## PASTORAL CHALLENGE:

To renew, our concept and experience of the People of God, in the light of the Word of God and Vatican II, in communion with the richness of its ministry, which avoids clericalism and favors pastoral conversion.



*“In the people of God, Communion and mission are profoundly connected, they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other ... Communion gives rise to the mission, and mission is accomplished in communion.” In the particular churches, all of us members of the people of God are called to holiness in communion and mission, according to our specific vocations.” (DAp 163).*



# Encounter with the Word to illuminate life\*

## From the Holy Gospel according to Saint John 21, 1-19

Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. He said, "Throw your net on the boat's right side, and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. [c] When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, but the net was not torn even with so many. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread, gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

\* For the biblical texts we use a translation offered by the Bible of the Church in America of CELAM.

## **“We let ourselves be illuminated”**

**When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” (John 21,15).**

Peter, and his brothers in discipleship, "heard" from Jesus: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15,12) and they were able to also "see" it at the last supper, in such a way that it was well engraved: "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." (John 13,14). They heard, they saw, they felt, they shared the life and the gospel of Jesus Christ, but "they did not understand" until the Risen One became the encounter in their daily frustrations, failures and discouragements.

It is difficult to learn that love is not only a feeling, a desire or a human need but a "decision" to "give life for his friends". Peter will have to move from his good feelings (son of John) to a conscious and existential option of "loving like Jesus", Master and Lord.

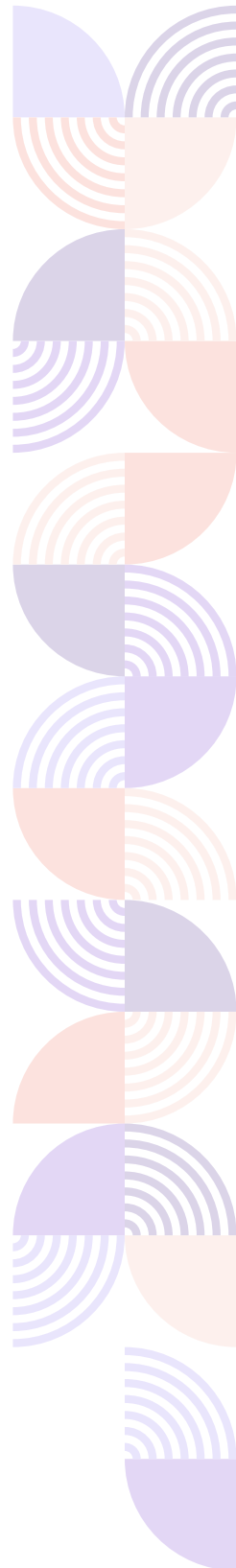
Because discipleship is nourished by the person of Jesus, it is essential to renew "in the light of the Word of God and Vatican II, our concept and experience of the Church People of God, in communion with the richness of its ministry, which avoids clericalism and favor pastoral conversion" (AEALC 9). Just as Peter must free himself from his imaginary about Jewish messianism, the disciples of the 21st century are also urged to pass from rigidity towards "mercy", from ritualistic control towards the joy of "celebration," from the medieval regression to the "utopia" of the Resurrected... that is, to the "Synodal, Samaritan and prophetic Church, outgoing and committed to the defense of life in our Peoples" (AEALC 9, a).

"The love that feeds" leads us to a constant personal, community, and institutional conversion that "implements structures of communion and participation" (AEALC 9, b) in all ecclesial spheres (AEALC 36).

Jesus does not evict Peter for his messianic errors or his infidelity in the passion, rather, with Samaritan tenderness, he asks him about the quality of his love and the responsibility of his choice. With Simón Pedro, we learn from mistakes, to live synodality in listening, discernment, decision-making, and evaluation of pastoral action" (AEALC 9, c), with "the pastoral of the encounter centered on the spirituality of the incarnation" (AEALC 36, b).

It is obvious that we do not intend to love-be more than others, but "like the Lord", to overcome the abuse of power and the arrogance of those who consider themselves better and more worthy, feeding the sour clericalism of ordained and lay people, perhaps too sure of their truth and too aware of the mistakes of others.

Humble, joyful, synodal, and Marian-Petrine shepherding is a vocational gift, and also the ecclesial proposal that opens us to "new heavens and a new earth" (cf. Ap 21,1), because We disciples of Jesus confess our faith with Peter's words: "You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68); "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Dap 101).





# Reflection to impact life from the Pastoral Challenges



In this time of grace, there is a growing desire to grow in synodality, since it means walking together co-responsibly, as people, with the future of our Church. Many signs invite us to an authentic pastoral conversion that opens paths of greater participation of all the People of God in the common vocation of taking charge of the life and mission of our Church.

The Easter season that we are celebrating invites us to renew the call to be disciples, which implies feeling summoned to unite intimately with Jesus (Cf. DAp 131). The beginning of discipleship is in a person, Jesus Christ, who comes to meet us to be known, to give a full horizon to life, and to reveal the fullness of divine and human love. When we arrive at that encounter of faith (Cf. DAp 243), at the vital understanding of that personal love “to the extreme”, we cannot fail to respond to this love if it is not with a similar love: ‘I will follow you wherever you go (Lk. 9, 57)’ (DAp 243), and I will love you forever.

Aparecida advocated a Church open to diversity, which appreciates and encourages the meeting and respectful dialogue between the various members of the People of God; a Church that bears witness to the great love of God, that breaks down the walls and erases the borders that we have built between us when we have not kept in mind the words of Jesus. His Spirit impels us to transcend these borders and unjust divisions and to recognize ourselves as sons and daughters loved by God and as brothers and sisters in Christ.

In this journey as the People of God and in communion with the richness of its ministry, the echo of what is evidenced by the listening held in the Ecclesial Assembly, places the Church facing the necessary conversion; the passage from a clerical Church to a synodal one, in which no bureaucracy, self-sufficiency, or abuse of power overshadows the action of the Spirit that calls for unity from the awareness of the diversity of vocations and the common dignity that we all bear for the Baptism, because in Baptism we have all received the Spirit.

Pope Francis repeatedly invites us to move from a clerical Church to a synodal Church: “[...] it is impossible to imagine a conversion of ecclesial actions without the active participation of all the members of the People of God (cf. DDC 138-139).







# The challenge we all face to influence life

To face this challenge implies that this Easter, we review our conversion process at the personal, community, pastoral and synodal levels with sincerity, recognizing that conversion must be practical, accompanied by concrete works, and not a mere speech.



*Bearing in mind and heart our experience of the People of God:*

- What attitudes of Jesus lead us to recognize this experience of being God's people?
- Do you remember any words of Pope Francis that guide us in the face of the challenge of renewing our concept and experience of the People of God Church?
- What new challenges does this situation pose to the pastoral of your community?
- To what could you personally commit in favor of the victims of social and ecclesial injustices?

Let us take one more step in our process of conversion, regarding our commitment to renew, in the light of the Word of God and Vatican II, our concept and experience of the People of God Church:

- **From our conversion:** Feel called by God to be missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, members of the people of God (Cf. DI 3)
- **From our community conversion:** In Aparecida, we are reminded of the importance of pilgrimages, where the People of God can be recognized on the way (Cf. DAp. 259) How much do we seek to maintain this form of popular piety?
- **From our pastoral conversion:** In the particular churches, all the members of the people of God, according to their specific vocations, are called to holiness in communion and mission (Cf. DAp 163). To what extent do we feel called to live holiness in our apostolate?
- **From our synodal conversion:** The Church is recognized in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council as a "sacrament of the unity of the human race" (Cf. DAp. 523). How aware are we of this reality?



# Celebrate life



*To be Church is to be God's people,  
The leaven of God in humanity,  
announcement of salvation in this world of ours.  
We pray to you Risen Jesus,  
that the Church be a place of mercy  
and of the hope of God, your Father.  
That in it we can all feel welcomed,  
loved, forgiven, encouraged, and stimulated to live  
according to the good life of the Gospel.*

*Amen*



## SIGLAS

- AEALC: Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2021  
CV: Christus Vivit, Papa Francisco  
DAp: Documento of Aparecida, 2007.  
DC: Document for the road. Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2021  
DDC: Document for Community Discernment, Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2021  
DI: Inaugural Speech, Aparecida.  
IL: Instrumentum Laboris, Sínodo Amazonía.  
EG: Evangelii Gaudium, Pope Francis  
EN: Evangelii Nuntiandi, Pope Paul VI  
QAm: Querida Amazonía, Pope Francis  
SA DF: Sínodo Amazonía, Documento Final.  
SN: Narrative Synthesis. Listening to the 1st Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2021







*That is why the Church, like the Virgin Mary, is a mother. This Marian vision of the Church is the best remedy for a merely functional or bureaucratic Church. (DAP 268).*

Our Lady of the Thirty-Three, Uruguay