

Homily
Friday of the Seventh Week of Easter
May 17, 2024

Who loves Jesus? It seems like a silly question; of course, we all do.

Who has ever sinned? We all have; it's part of our human condition, thanks to original sin.

Who knows Jesus is alive? We all know He is alive. We just celebrated His Resurrection and His Ascension. We will soon feast at the table of His banquet.

If we know Jesus is alive and we love Him, then why do we sin? If you don't know, you're in good company. One of my favorite scripture verses is Romans, Chapter 7, Verse 19, "For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want."

Peter knows what it is like to sin, to reject Jesus, even after proclaiming that Jesus is the Messiah, the Chosen One of God. What was he thinking?

He wasn't thinking, at least not rationally; he was afraid, so he lied. We all have our reasons for committing sin. The big ones are sloth, envy, greed, lust, gluttony, wrath, and especially pride. That one seems to be my favorite.

It was pride that led Adam and Eve to sin. And with original sin came Salvation History. The path to salvation leads us to Jesus who not only took on all our sin, but also established a way to forgiveness and redemption. Do we love Jesus? Yes, we do. This is what Jesus asked Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" Three times Jesus asked Peter this question and three times Peter affirmed his love. And each time, Jesus tells him to take care of His people.

This is the only thing Jesus wants of us, to take care of His people. The greatest commandment? Love God; love our neighbor. Jesus tells us there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for his friends. We do this by being selfless, by looking outside ourselves, by dying to self, by keeping our focus on Jesus. And we see Jesus in everyone we meet.

And when it is difficult to see Jesus in those we meet, we remember the last words of today's Gospel, "Follow me."