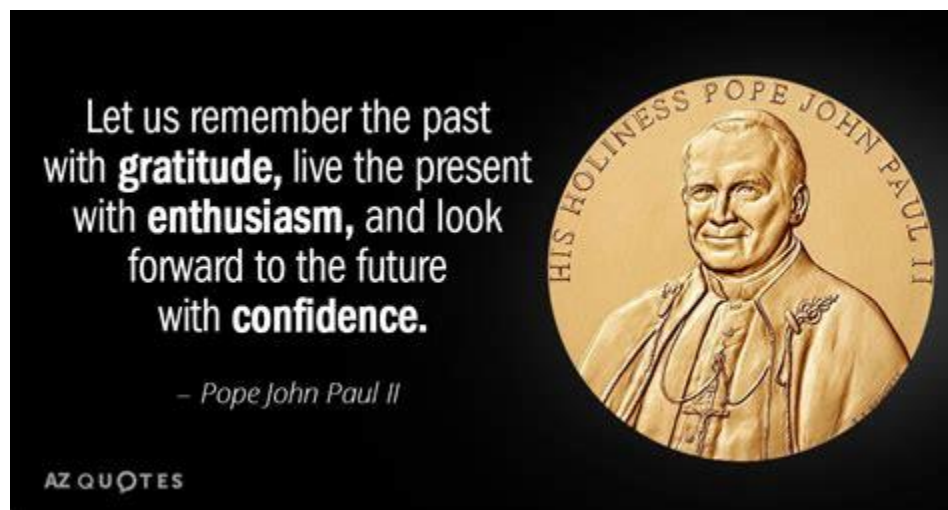


FATHER JOHN – “I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth. Let my soul glory in the LORD; the lowly will hear me and be glad. Glorify the LORD with me, let us together extol his name. I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Look to him that you may be radiant with joy, and your faces may not blush with shame. When the poor one called out, the LORD heard, and from all his distress he saved him. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them. Taste and see how good the LORD is; blessed the man who takes refuge in him.” ~ Psalm 34

The Lord hears the cry of the poor!!!



Early on after the resurrection, the apostles seemed to be in doubt about the resurrection of our Lord Jesus and all that had happened in the days since His crucifixion. “*When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; **but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.***” (John 21)

They went back to their old ways; the apostles, who had been fishermen before they were called to be apostles, went back to fishing. It’s almost as if they had given up on our Lord Jesus. I’ve found over the years that part of human nature is to go back to the past, to what we learned years before. When we struggle, when we have doubts, when we fear for the future, when we suffer from stress or anxiety, we tend to go back to what we learned and experienced at an early age. We tend to react in the same ways and manners that formed us years ago.

Going back to the past, to the old ways of life, is a dangerous move in the spiritual life. It may work out fine when we're dealing with the things of the world; issues at work, family relationships, etc. But, it does not work well in the spiritual life. Going back to our old way of life does not lead us into a deeper relationship with our Lord. In fact, it can easily lead us away from the Lord if we re-enter practices that are harmful to our spiritual life.

The past, the old ways of life, did not give the apostles reassurance. It did not give them a future. They doubted and thought their future had ended with the death of our Lord Jesus. Trying to go to the old ways gave them nowhere to go.

The same thing can happen to us when we doubt, when we fear, when we suffer anxiety in the spiritual life. We can fall into the old patterns of life that lead us away from our Lord rather than to Him. We need to be vigilant in our practice of the faith and always look to the resurrection of our Risen Lord and to the encounter that we have with Him.

But, there is hope! Our Lord always gives us hope. The apostles went from fear and doubt to doing great works of faith! How did that happen? When our Lord Jesus appeared to them after the resurrection, when they encountered the Risen Lord on the road to Emmaus, when he appeared to them in the Upper Room and when *"Jesus revealed himself again to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias"*, He drove them into the present moment and into the future. They gave up fishing again and took up the Mission our Lord had given them.

They realized that they had nothing to offer any one other than what they could do for them through the power and name of our Lord Jesus. *"If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved, then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; **in his** name this man stands before you healed. He is the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved."* (Acts 4)

Our Lord Jesus transforms us. He touches our hearts and our souls, and in doing so, we are forever changed. The transformation of our hearts, our minds and our

souls by Our Lord Jesus is permanent and is meant to lead us on a mission in His name; to bring His Good News into the world. Rather than looking back, we need to hold fast to our faith, to our Easter faith in His resurrection; and when we do, we will realize the strength to live as His new creation, recreated in His Image and Likeness, through His divine love and mercy.

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.

