



The Already and the Not Yet

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

The church celebrates again and again during the Easter season a core truth of Christian thought and belief: “the already and the not yet.” Jesus has already saved us, but we have not yet experienced the fullness of the kingdom. In this belief, there is tension, the experience of standing in the middle, where the tension is lived, and hopefully where balance is achieved.

What makes the tension bearable is that we know we have not been left as orphans. We are not on our own. The Spirit of God is sent to us and enables us to hold fast to what we have known and experienced and what is still unknown to us. Scripture and tradition, dogmas and doctrines, sacraments and sacramentals, practices and disciplines, all inspired by the Spirit of God, provide us with the necessary support and direction and help us remain balanced.

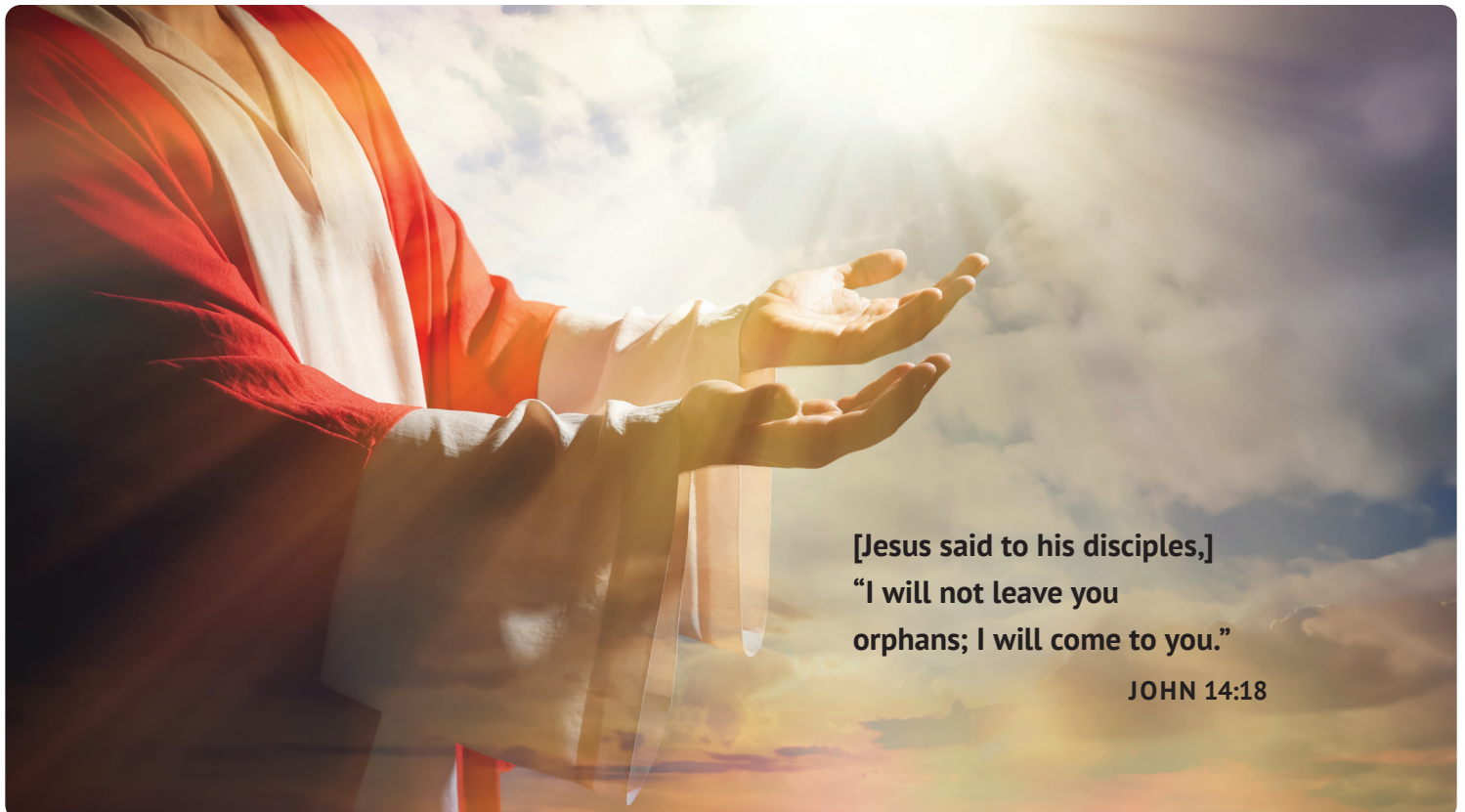
As wonderful as each of these gifts of the Spirit may be, each gift must be received, encountered, enabled, and lived. If the gifts are given but never received—and, even more important, used and shared—we not only refuse a gift freely given by our God but also deprive ourselves of the means to maintain our balance and remain on the path that leads to life and light. ●



LEARN ABOUT
THE AUTHORS
OF OUR PARISH
COMMUNITY

Reflect

Is there a gift from God I have not received or lived? How can I begin?



[Jesus said to his disciples,]
“I will not leave you
orphans; I will come to you.”

JOHN 14:18

Dear Padre,

What are the role and responsibilities of a parish priest in his church and community?

Primarily, a parish priest is a teacher and sanctifier. As teacher, he is obliged to instruct people in the faith, especially through the homily and catechetical formation—the Catholic education of children and young adults. He fosters “works through which the spirit of the gospel is promoted, even in what pertains to social justice.” With lay assistance, he brings the gospel message “to those who have ceased the practice of their religion or do not profess the true faith” (*Code of Canon Law* 528 §1).

As sanctifier, he works “so that the Christian faithful are nourished through the devout celebration of the sacraments,” especially the Eucharist and the sacrament of penance. He is also responsible for ensuring that the Eucharist is central to the faith community by encouraging active participation in the liturgy and parish life so that it’s authentically celebrated. (See *CCL* 528 §2.)

His other pastoral obligations are in the area of governance. These duties include outreach to those entrusted to his care, especially the sick and dying. He fosters growth in the Christian life within the family. “[W]ith particular diligence he is to seek out the poor, the afflicted, the lonely, those exiled from their country, and similarly those weighed down by special difficulties.” Moreover, he is responsible for grounding his local community within the broader universal Church’s mission. (See *CCL* 529.) ●



ZAMRZUJI TONOV / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / Dear Padre.org

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

The Lord wanted us in this time filled with challenges that, at times, seem to exceed our strength. We are called to embrace these challenges, to interpret them evangelically, to experience them as opportunities to bear witness. Let us not flee from them! Pastoral commitment, like that of study, become for us a school to learn how to build the kingdom of God in today’s complex and challenging history.

ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY OF ROME,
JUNE 12, 2025

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday

May 11

Easter Weekday

Acts 16:11–15

Jn 15:26–16:4a

Thursday

May 14

St. Matthias, Apostle

Acts 1:15–17, 20–26

Jn 15:9–17

Sunday

May 17

The Ascension of the Lord

Acts 1:1–11

Eph 1:17–23

Mt 28:16–20

Tuesday

May 12

Easter Weekday

Acts 16:22–34

Jn 16:5–11

Friday

May 15

Easter Weekday

Acts 18:9–18

Jn 16:20–23

Wednesday

May 13

Easter Weekday

Acts 17:15, 22–18:1

Jn 16:12–15

Saturday

May 16

Acts 18:23–28

Jn 16:23b–28