

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER 04/14/2024.

Theme: “Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away.”

In the First Reading we just heard proclaimed, Peter seems to be telling the people that forgiveness is **more than just being sorry**... it’s about being different and living a whole new way.

Jesus bore our sins not simply so that our sins would “disappear”, but so that our **relationship with our God would be mended, healed, and strengthened.**

During this season of Easter, we are invited to reflect on and wrestle with exactly what Jesus’ death and resurrection means for each of us. In faith, we believe that Jesus died to heal a broken world, to bridge the gap that had grown between God and his beloved sons and daughters, **to redeem and save us.**

And in a personal sense, I have been made new. Now what? Now what do I do?

Over the next several weeks we will hear passages from the Acts of the Apostles, passages which show some of the challenges faced by the early Christian community as they strove to continue Jesus’ mission...to preach as he preached, to heal as he healed, and to **love as he loved.**

And in many ways, their struggles are our struggles, their challenges ...our challenge’s, their disagreements...our disagreements, their calling...our calling.

Who is Jesus? What is he asking of us? Who was I created to be?

When we ask those questions and sincerely long to embrace whatever answer God chooses to give, then we are on the path to real reconciliation, real healing, **real transformation** and real change.

Jesus’ perfect and selfless act has made possible the forgiveness of our sins. He took them upon himself and rendered them powerless through the power of perfect love. The chains have been broken. **We are set free.** The gift does not end there. Jesus is offering so much more, new life, everlasting life, ...full of purpose, meaning, joy, beauty, and peace.

But more than that, I want to be different...I want to be the loving person you created me to be. I think Peter had it exactly right. “Repent....and **be converted.**”

Each time we seek God’s forgiveness, may we have the courage to take that next step, embracing the new, transformed life God offers. Then, like those early disciples, may we have courage to allow our new selves to **transform the world**, and help make it a place of peace, hope, generosity and love.