

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, April 14, 2024
Third Sunday of Easter
Cycle B

During my seminary information, we once attended a fellowship of former drug dependents who had become the beneficiaries of the Church's rehabilitation and social reintegration program in the Diocese. During break time, I chatted with one former addict and asked what turned his life around. He said it was the touching testimony of another drug dependent who lost his family and loved ones because of drugs, and vowed to change in order to win them back again. I truly felt his loss and I don't want it to happen to me, he concluded. Truly, a life testimony is sometimes more powerful than the most eloquent of sermons.

In today's Gospel, the risen Christ appeared once more to the depleted Apostles. To calm their fears and discouragement, Jesus did not deliver a sermon. He simply showed them His wounds, saying, "Why are you troubled, and why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones, as you see I have". Jesus showed Thomas the wounds of His hands and side, and Thomas was healed of his unbelief.

Sometimes, others need to see your wounds that they might be strengthened. Sometimes, they need to touch your wounds for theirs to be healed. This might be the reason why the Risen Jesus still bore on His glorified body the wounds of His crucifixion. To heal and strengthen the Apostles. Jesus could have risen with a new body that is untouched by human sinfulness. But He did not. His risen body bore the wounds of Calvary like the badges on honor.

The devil once appeared to Saint Teresa of Avila, looking like Jesus. Immediately the saint exclaimed, "You are not Jesus!" "How did you know?", the devil countered. The saint responded, "Because you have no wounds".

Healed wounds turn a test into a testimony, a mess into a message, a tribulation into triumph. We all have wounds in life big and small. We need Jesus to touch and heal those wounds so that He can turn them into something that will strengthen our wounded brothers and sisters. Don't waste your pain. Redeem it and redeem others as well. As Jesus reminded us all today when He said, "You are witnesses of these things."