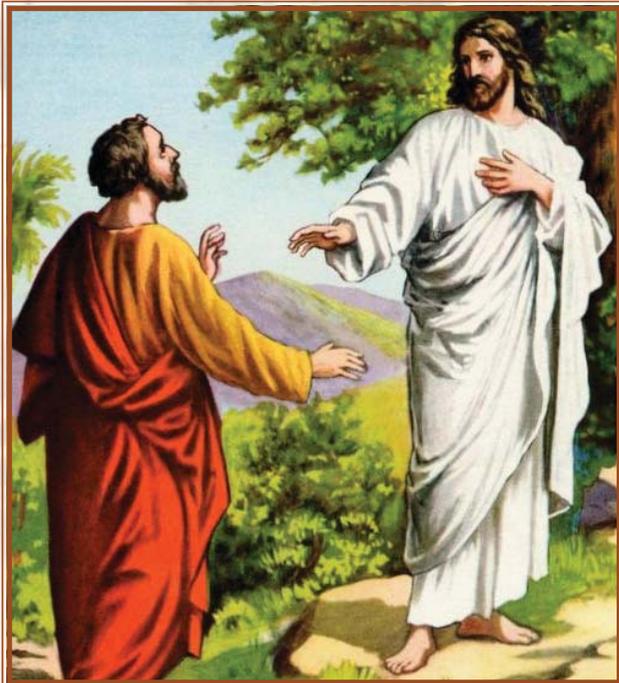




# RECOLLECTION GUIDE

Franciscan Province of San Pedro Bautista-Philippines  
MAY 2014

**“LORD** you know everything,  
you know that I love you!”



A Disciple's Response to the Easter Mission Mandate

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## OPENING SONG

### DAY OF RESURRECTION

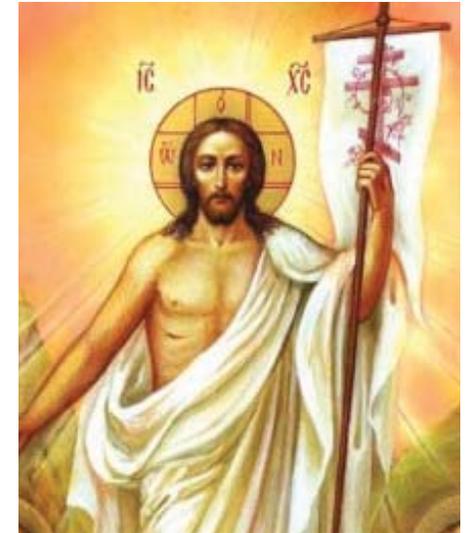
*(From Hymns of Easter Season, Office of Readings)*

The day of resurrection  
Earth, tell it out abroad  
The Passover of gladness  
The Passover of God  
From death to life eternal  
From earth unto the sky  
Our Christ hath brought us over  
With hymns of victory.

Our hearts be pure from evil  
That we may see aright  
The Lord in rays eternal  
Of resurrection light

And listening to His accents  
May hear, so calm and plain  
His own "All hail!" and, hearing  
May raise the victor strain.

Now let the heavens be joyful  
Let earth the song begin  
Let the round world keep triumph  
And all that is therein  
Let all things seen and unseen  
Their notes in gladness blend  
For Christ the Lord hath risen  
Our joy that hath no end.



## OPENING PRAYER

*(cf. Collect, Common of Pastors)*

**O** God, light of the faithful and shepherd of souls, you choose your pastors and fill them with a spirit of truth and of love to pasture your people by their words and examples. Grant that through your Son's example, guidance and inspiration, we may be firm in the faith we profess and keep the ministerial promises we have made. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## GOSPEL READING



### The Dialogue between **JESUS** and **PETER**

(John 21:15-19).



## DO YOU LOVE ME?

“Lord you know everything, you know that I Love you!”

**W**hen they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?’ Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ A second time he said to him, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ He said to him the third time, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ And he said to him, ‘Lord,

you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.’ (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, ‘Follow me.’

## TEXTUAL BACKGROUND

**T**he textual context of our Gospel passage, John 21:1-25, is considered to be the second conclusion of the Johannine Gospel (see also Jn. 20:1-31, the first conclusion). This is the appearance of Jesus to the seven disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, the third resurrection manifestation of Jesus. Typically, it is a Johannine scene. It is inserted in the general economy of the Fourth Gospel, that without it, such Gospel might appear to be incomplete (see Jn. 6). The dialogue between Jesus and Peter stands at the heart of the chapter.

The dialogue treats the doctrinal and pastoral authority of Peter, as well as his vocation (missionary and shepherd) and glorification already founded on the Risen Christ.

## INTERPRETATION

(Cf. Raymond Brown, *Christ in the Gospels of the Liturgical Year*)

**T**here is a fascinating shift of topic in the sequence of chapter 21. Peter was part of the group of disciples

who made the huge catch of fish; thus he was part of the general apostolic mission that would bring in large numbers of believers. But now Jesus speaks to him alone about sheep! The catching of fish is an apt image for an evangelizing mission; but to picture the ongoing care of those brought in by that mission one has to change the image. We

Thus we are invited to see in Peter the combination of missionary and pastor. The role of shepherding the sheep signifies Peter’s special identity and authority in the Christian community.

call this care of those already converted “pastoral,” precisely because of the set use of flock and sheep in this connection. Thus we are invited

to see in Peter the combination of missionary and pastor. The role of shepherding the sheep signifies Peter’s special identity and authority in the Christian community.

The traditional interpretation associates the threefold questioning of Jesus as paralleling the threefold denial of Jesus by Peter during the passion. It is a sort of rehabilitation for Peter. In this interpretation however, the disposition of Jesus is a kind of remembering of the unfaithfulness of Peter, which does not more likely go along with Jesus’ pedagogy. Besides, Jesus’ resurrection greeting is “Shalom”, “Peace be with you”. Could it be that the resurrected Christ who greets with shalom would also

be reminding about the past denials and abandonment done to him? We can say that the dialogue between the risen Jesus and Peter has a more immediate purpose than Peter's repentance. The more immediate purpose is that a major pastoral role is being assigned to him. This comes with the Johannine emphasis that no pastoral assignment is made without the assurance that Simon Peter loves Jesus. One who would

care for the sheep must first show love for Jesus, even to the point of laying down life itself for him. The mutual love between Jesus and the believers is a most important factor, and that the criterion applied to anyone who would exercise pastoral care. Also, the major role of shepherding is far more important than the issue of how much power Peter had over the sheep.

## Points for REFLECTION and SHARING

1. Ours is a time when people quarrel over who should have authority. Do we see our positions, the authorities given us as opportunities of loving Jesus? As opportunities of tending, caring and feeding His sheep? As occasions of loving to the point of laying down our lives for the sheep? Or are we always antagonistic towards the sheep that are entrusted to us?
2. Jesus continues to speak of the flock as "my lambs, my sheep". This manifests that the flock never passes into the proprietorship of the human shepherd; no one can ever take the place
3. of Jesus. Speaking of himself as the model shepherd, Jesus claimed, "I know mine, and mine know me" (Jn. 10:4), a reminder that only Jesus can use the word "mine" even though Peter feeds the sheep. Do we consider Jesus as the sole owner of the flock, and even the mission to the flock undertaken by us? Or are we possessive? Or our authority tends to be possessive?
3. Jesus entrusted and delegated to Peter the ministry of tending, caring and feeding his sheep. Are we capable of sharing the responsibility entrusted and delegated to us? Are we open for collaboration with others? Do we recognize that the ultimate donor of responsibility is Jesus Christ, our leader who from the very onset has invited us to follow him?



## FRANCISCAN READING

### The Life of SAINT FRANCIS

(Second Book) by Thomas of Celano

He saw many rushing for positions of authority. Despising their arrogance, he strove by his own example to call them back from such sickness. Indeed, he used to say that it was good and acceptable thing in God's sight to take care of others. He held it was appropriate for some to take on the care of souls as long as in this they sought nothing of their own will, but in all things constantly obeyed God's will. Such people should consider in the first place their own salvation and aim for the growth of their subjects, not their applause. They should seek glory before God, not honor from people, never desiring but fearing the office of prelate. If given to them, it would humble them, not exalt them; were it taken away, it would not leave them dejected, but uplifted...It hurt him that some had abandoned their early deeds and, in the midst of new discoveries, had forgotten their original simplicity. That is why he grieved over those who now sank to the level of what was low and cheap, although they once had striven for higher things with all their desire. They had abandoned true joy and were running here and there, wandering through the fields of an empty freedom. So he prayed for God's mercy to set his sons free and fervently begged that they be preserved in the grace given to them (2Cel 104).



## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What is my attitude towards position entrusted and delegated to me?
2. How do I exercise the authority that goes with my position?
3. How do I see my status as a religious?

## FRANCISCAN FRIARS' REFLECTION

### GOD in our MIDST The Paradox of Power

By Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

**“B**lessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). These are the familiar opening words of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount his inaugural address. At the very beginning of his teaching, Jesus gives us a revolutionary understanding of how change happens.

In God’s reign, the “poor in spirit”—those who have been excluded, rejected, overlooked and deemed useless—in fact have a big advantage. They have a “privileged seeing” over the rest of us.

The poor in spirit are those who have been defeated somehow and who then rediscover themselves in a new place of utter security and freedom. They no longer need or believe in the old power or the old identity and often appear simple and naive to those of us still playing the game. In our competitive eyes they are poor and powerless. In Jesus’ eyes they are “blessed” and “happy.”

Beginning in the Hebrew Scriptures and continuing through the remainder of the Bible, we are taken on a journey into powerlessness. Over and over, biblical revelation is undercutting what we call power and relocating it. It is one of the most difficult messages God has to deliver.

The word of God is seeking to stop the cycle of violence that has plagued human history and to unlock it from within. Problems cannot be solved by changing things from the top down or the outside in. Instead, the Bible gradually reveals what I would call “relational” or spiritual power: transforming things from the bottom up and the inside out.

### Slow But Effective

Spiritual power is the ability to influence others through one’s very being, through who one is in God, through the transformative power of truth and love. It moves from God’s very being to people who have let God love them, and from these people who have been loved by God to everything they touch. Yes, it is slow but it is ultimately effective.

Only vulnerable people can keep growing and converting. They allow events to influence them. It is always the vulnerable and powerless ones that God can risk sharing power with because they alone know how to handle power. All the rest of us will normally abuse it.

Who does God choose to show God’s self to? An enslaved people rather than a dominant power—the Israelites as opposed to the Egyptians or the Babylonians. They gradually learn that they are not alone, that Someone else is in control. And so, they can let go of control!

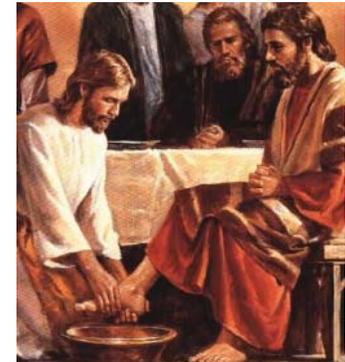
The theme continues with barren women (Sarah, Rachel, Rebecca and Elizabeth), neglected sons (Isaac and David), rejected prophets (all of them) and in the daily ministry of Jesus with the lepers, blind, lame and poor (who respond to him, while the powerful fight him and finally kill him).

### Jesus As Model

Spiritual power reaches its fullness in Jesus. He never forces God’s will but invites and awaits transformation. Even after he models the way of powerlessness to his apostles, they argue about who is the greatest. He challenges them: “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make

their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve...” (Matthew 20:25-28).

Through his life and teaching Jesus has forever revealed the nature of true power. He has given us a critique of all systemic power, prestige and possessions that we are still hard-pressed to accept 2,000 years later. Without the experience of true spiritual power, we will never have the security to let go of all of its lesser forms.



*“the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve...”  
(Matthew 20:25-28).*

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Talk about someone from Scripture (other than Jesus) who triumphs while seeming to be powerless.
2. Name a time you felt powerless. How did you cope?

## Additional INTERPRETATION and REFLECTION on our GOSPEL PASSAGE

Ceslas Spicq and Yves Simoens

In the Greek text, there is an interplay of words between **agapan** and **philein**: Jesus asked Peter if Peter does love him, and the question is repeated three times.

1. Jesus: Simon, son of John, do you love me (*agapâis me*) more than these?

**Peter: Yes, Lord; you know that I love you (philô se).**

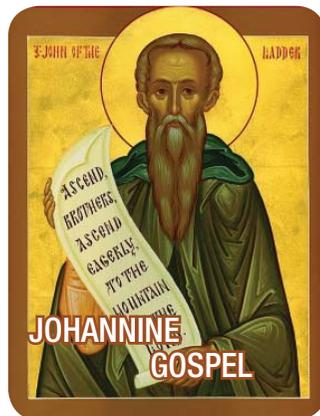
2. Jesus: Simon, son of John, do you love me (*agapâis me*) more than these?

**Peter: Yes, Lord; you know that I love you (philô se).**

1. Jesus: Simon, son of John, do you love me (*phileîs me*) more than these?

**Peter: Lord, you know (oidas) everything; you know (ginôskeis) that I love you (philô se).**

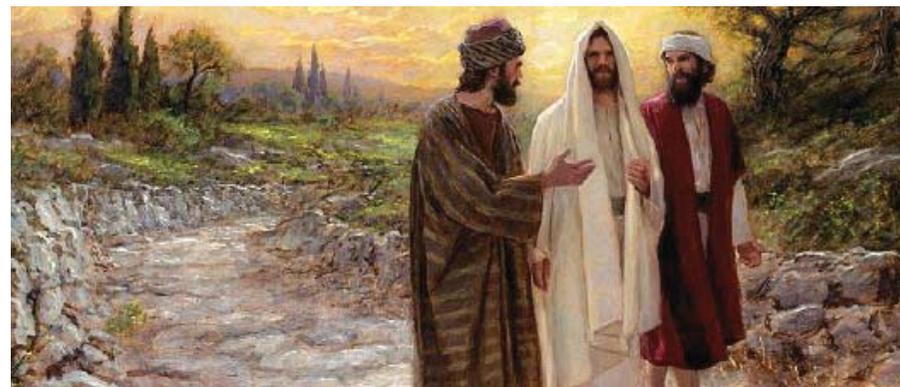
In the third question, Jesus shifted the use of verb from *agapan* to *philein*.



This goes along with the kenotic character of the Word-made-Flesh in the Johannine Gospel. It is Jesus our Lord who moves downward to the level of Peter and does not force Peter to move upwards to Jesus' level; it is Jesus who reaches out to us. He meets us where we are and he does not force us to meet him where he is, an incarnational character. The love of Peter may not be *agape* (our traditional notion of supreme and perfect love); it is filial yet it is true and complete, and it has been enough for Jesus. It is all that Peter can give, and that filial love for Jesus becomes the basis of Peter's missionary and pastoral authority in tending, caring and feeding the sheep. This same love is the mainspring for Peter until the end as he lays down his life for Jesus, the Master and Leader. It is a love that is self-giving.

1. Given our positions, status and/or authorities, are we capable of moving downwards?
2. Do we show compassion and understanding to those who could not cope up with our levels, set standards and the like?

## FRANCISCAN FRIARS' REFLECTION



## GOD in our MIDST Transformed by EASTER

By Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

Christian history reaches its crescendo point in the Resurrection of Jesus. The risen Jesus is the final revelation of the heart of God—a God who teaches love rather than hate, forgiveness rather than blame, nonviolence rather than violence.

Recall Jesus' encounters with his

disciples after his Resurrection. He comes to the circle of followers with whom he had spent three years, the people closest to him who had nevertheless rejected, betrayed and abandoned him. Following his Resurrection Jesus has the opportunity to chastise them. And yet, in all four Gospel accounts of the risen Christ we see that Jesus neither berates nor blames his disciples.

There is nothing to be afraid of in the risen Jesus. We have in him the perfect icon of a God who is safe and a universe that is safe.

We have a God who does not blame, does not punish, does not threaten, does not dominate. We have

a God who breathes forgiveness. The whole biblical tradition has been moving to this moment where God is identified with universal forgiveness.

The Resurrection of Jesus tells us that there is no victory through domination. There is no such thing as triumph by force. By his life, death and resurrection Jesus stops the

cycle of violence and challenges the notion of dominating power. He invites us to relational or spiritual power, where we are not just changed but transformed. And not transformed from the top down but from the bottom up, not from the outside in but from the inside out. Transformed into God.



## CLOSING HYMN

### At the **LAMB'S** High Feast We **SING**

*(From Hymns of Easter Season,  
Night Prayer)*

At the Lamb's high feast we sing  
Praise to our victorious king,  
Who has washed us in the tide  
Flowing from his pierced side.  
Alleluia!

Praise we him, whose love divine  
Gives his sacred blood for wine,  
Gives his body for the feast  
Christ the victim, Christ the priest.  
Alleluia!

Where the paschal blood is poured,  
Death's dread angel sheathes the sword;  
Israel's hosts triumphant go  
Through the wave that drowns the foe.  
Alleluia!

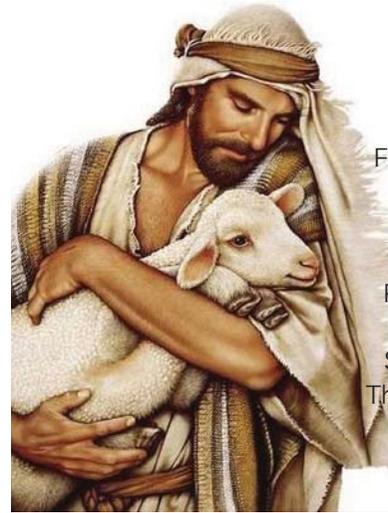
Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed,  
Paschal victim, paschal bread;  
With sincerity and love  
Eat we manna from above.  
Alleluia!

Mighty Victim from the sky,  
Hell's fierce powers beneath you lie;  
You have conquered in the fight  
You have brought us life and light.  
Alleluia!

Now no more can death appall,  
Now no more the grave enthrall;  
You have opened paradise,  
And your saints in you shall rise.  
Alleluia!

Easter triumph, Easter joy!  
This alone can sin destroy;  
From sin's power, Lord, set us free,  
Newborn souls in you to be.  
Alleluia!

Father, who the crown shall give,  
Savior, by whose death we live,  
Spirit, guide through all our days;  
Three in One, Your name we praise.  
Alleluia!



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