

**Homily – Friday of the Seventh Week of Easter  
Mass at St. John Bosco School – May 17, 2024**

Thank you, Sisters, for inviting me to celebrate this Mass here today! I am so happy to be here with you and the whole St. John Bosco School community.

Today's readings invite us to reflect deeply on our commitment to Jesus and the responsibilities that come with it. In our first reading, we encounter how St. Paul faced unjust condemnation. Saint Paul is ready to die as a testimony to the truth that Jesus has risen from the dead. Humans often judge deceitfully and unfairly. Saint Paul reminds us that we must always say the truth, even when it is hard. Despite the trials and tribulations, Paul remained steadfast, echoing the sentiment he expresses in his Letter to the Galatians: *“yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me...”* (Gal 2:20). This profound statement reminds us that our lives, too, should reflect the presence of Christ within us. Jesus is *“the way and the truth and the life.”* (Jn 14:6).

In the Gospel we witness how Jesus asks Peter three times: *“Do you love me?”* This happens after the Resurrection, reminding us of the three times Peter denied even knowing Jesus, while the Lord was being unfairly judged. Now, every time Jesus asks him, *“Do you love me?”*, Peter responds with humility, recognizing his weakness and expressing his love for the Lord. This dialogue between Jesus and Peter shows us the most important thing in our faith: love. God's righteous judgment is based on mercy. It is love which unites us to Christ and enables us to serve others selflessly.

Just as Peter was called to shepherd the flock, we are also entrusted with this sacred duty. But what does it mean to be a shepherd? It means to love as Christ loves, to serve as Christ serves, and to lead by example. Our love for God should overflow into our love for one another, guiding us to care for and nurture our brothers and sisters in faith.

Yet, we must also confront our own shortcomings and failures, just as Peter did. Like Peter, we may have denied Christ in our lives with our bad behavior, due to fear or doubt. But Jesus, in His infinite mercy, offers us the chance to repent and start anew. He invites us to confess our love for Him with humble sincerity.

Moreover, the upcoming solemnity of Pentecost reminds us of the Holy Spirit's transformative power within us. Pope Francis reminds us that we cannot be courageous on our own. We need the gifts of the Holy Spirit: *"frankness, courage... a grace that the Holy Spirit gives on the day of Pentecost."* Let us open our hearts to receive these great gifts and allow them to move us to greater service and deeper faith.

As we reflect on the examples of St. Paul and St. Peter, let us ask ourselves: Do our actions reflect the love of Christ? And are we willing to follow Him, even in the face of adversity?

May Our Lady of Guadalupe help us make of our lives a continual response to God's love, as we journey together in faith and service.