



OUR LADY *of*
GOOD COUNSEL
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fr. Matt's Musings

May 6, 2019

Fires

This past Sunday, we read from John's gospel where the risen Jesus cooked breakfast for His disciples on the beach. It was cooked on a charcoal fire. After breakfast, Jesus spoke with Peter. It was the second fire for Peter. On Holy Thursday, Peter warmed his hands at a fire. At that fire, he denied Jesus three times. It was a fire of fear, denial, guilt, and shame.

Jesus' fire is a different fire. It is a fire of new life, forgiveness, mercy, and future possibilities. At this fire, Jesus asks Peter three times if he loves Him. Each time, Peter responds, "yes." Yet, when Jesus asks him the third time, Peter is in distress. His memory must return him to the other fire. Yet, Jesus will not leave him at the first fire. Jesus simply tells him to feed, tend and love God's people. The risen Lord will not allow the disciples to live in guilt, fear, shame and the painful memory of their abandonment of the Lord. Jesus invites them to the fire of new life. Forgiveness does not erase or change the past; it does open the possibility of a larger future.

We all have weak moments where words were said or actions done that we would like to take back or change. Our shame, guilt, and fear are very real. We have the ability to stay at that first fire and warm ourselves in self-loathing or the invitation to move to the fire of mercy, love and new life and warm ourselves there. With that warmth, we are called to tend to God's people in a similar way. I hope we choose the second fire. The first one is not worth

the heat it provides.

Live Jesus!

Fr. Matt

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