

**For The Bulletin Of
April 15, 2018**



**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF
EASTER**

From Father Robert

The student teacher was eager to receive some comments after his first experience in the classroom. The mentor offered a gentle critique: “When some students don’t understand the lesson, it isn’t enough simply to repeat it more loudly.” But the student teacher’s experience can be our own many times. My explanation was so good! They’ll understand it if I repeat it again...But instead of repeating something over and over, more loudly each time, it might be good to try another example or another explanation instead. Or it might be worth the effort to appeal to a different style of learner. Perhaps the first approach to the lesson appealed to the visual learners. The second could be pitched to the auditory learners.

Now that we are in the Third Week of Easter, we hear yet another story of a resurrection appearance of Jesus. There

are a number of different Easter stories that appeal to us on a variety of levels. Initially, the story was the finding of the empty tomb. Then, we had a story of the appearance of Jesus to the disciples without Thomas, followed by one with Thomas. Thomas says he will not believe unless he probes the nail marks. Now we have another story where the Risen Jesus eats a meal. He is said to have flesh and bones. He is not a ghost. His eating baked fish virtually confirms that.

If we didn’t understand with the empty tomb, if we didn’t understand when Jesus appeared to even Thomas, now there is another appearance where He graphically demonstrates that He is present amongst them. Of course, each of the three stories we are referring to are from different gospel writers: the empty tomb (Mark), the appearance to Thomas (John), and now the risen Jesus eating fish (Luke). But these texts are given to us on successive Sundays to confirm for us that Jesus truly rose from the dead.

Moreover, today’s gospel passage begins with a line that should not be neglected: the disciples recounted “how Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.” Of course, the Emmaus story precedes this in the Gospel of Luke. And Luke is telling his audience that the “breaking of bread” is the way Jesus is made known in the community. No longer is Jesus appearing to His assembled followers. That ended with the ascension. Instead, the community will now come together and experience Christ in the breaking of the bread, or in what we call Eucharist.

So, in addition to the empty tomb, and the appearances, this is yet another way our resurrected Lord is made known to us. By hearing a variety of different stories, we might, like the disciples, come gradually to accepting the risen Christ.

Living The Paschal Mystery

Each time we celebrate Eucharist, the risen Christ is made known to us as He was made known to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We may wish for a resurrection appearance where Jesus would eat baked fish, but those appearances are complete. After the ascension, the primary way we come to know Him is through the “breaking of the bread.” The risen Lord is flesh and bones, a true human being, raised to new life by the power of God. We participate in that new life by consuming the bread blessed and broken and the cup outpoured. The breaking symbolizes the death. And the sharing symbolizes the community united in the one loaf. The bread is nourishment and life-giving, as is Jesus Himself. It is no wonder that the early Christians, like us, find Jesus made known in the breaking of the bread and the sharing in the one cup.

As we come to this first part of the Easter Season and the resurrection appearances, what questions have been raised for you?

- When have you witnessed love that persevered in the most difficult and trying circumstances – and, in the end, that perseverance was rewarded?
- What have you learned from your own experiences of suffering and despair?

- Have you known someone who has been able to transform the suffering and injustice they encountered into hope and justice for others?
- When was the last time you confronted your own “ignorance” about something or someone?



About Liturgy: From Altar To Table

We continue our mystagogical reflection on the symbols of Easter. We see in today’s gospel the risen Christ asks for something to eat, and he eats what is prepared for Him as a sign that He is not an apparition. He’s not a ghost or something the disciples imagine. He is truly present! He proves this at an ordinary dinner table, just as He proved it to the disciples on the road to Emmaus in the section just before today’s reading from Luke’s gospel.

What does this mean, then, about our own dinner tables? If the risen Christ has shown Himself not only at the altar in the Eucharist but also in such ordinary places a diner on the road or at a home dinner table, should we not treat the tables wherever we eat as sacred spaces as well? Whenever we prepare food and place it before someone to eat in our

homes, do we see Christ present there, too?

This Easter Season, honor the tables where you eat and the opportunity to see Christ present there. Use a tablecloth on your kitchen or dining table if you don't already use one. Use your special-occasion plates, utensils, and glasses, for Easter is truly a special occasion! Commit to eating at least one meal at home each week, on Sunday if possible. Light candles, turn off the tv, set aside all electronic devices, and put on some nice music for these meals. Every time you eat, know that Christ is there with you.



Relay For Life Fundraiser

Our parish Relay for Life Team is having a Bunco Fundraiser next Sunday, April 22nd, beginning at 4:30 p.m. in the parish hall. This event supports our team's efforts to raise funds for research for the American Cancer Society. All gifts are tax deductible. This is a great event for a great cause! Tickets for this event will be on sale in the gathering plaza after all liturgies both this weekend and next weekend, or you can purchase them from Maryann in the parish office.



YLI Annual Pasta Dinner

Our YLI is sponsoring their Annual Pasta Dinner on Sunday, April 29th, in our parish hall, patio, and garden, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. A special part of the day is celebrating the 90th birthday of our beloved Dorothy Lamendola! The menu consists of Garden Salad, Garlic Bread, and the most delicious Pasta and Sauce you will ever will have! There is also beer, wine, and dessert. Come out join your fellow parishioners and guests as we support our YLI and their many charitable projects which benefit both our parish and our sister parish of Holy Rosary. Tickets are available from the table in the Gathering Plaza after each liturgy or from the parish office during regular office hours.



Thank You

...to our faithful volunteers who arrive early each Saturday morning to clean and prepare the sanctuary and parish hall for the weekend: **Jun Bajet, Al Cosce, Rose Salamanca, Carole Miller, Emilia Freking, Mency Osborne, Heather Hatteroth, and Steve Rojek.**

...to our faithful volunteer parishioners who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall each Saturday and throughout the following week: **Robert Goncalves, Mary Ewing, Virginia Noack, Patricia Britton, and Harlan Young.**

...to **Mary Anne Douville** and **Faultless Cleaners** for all the dry cleaning, sewing and miscellaneous other tasks that are completed by her for the parish.

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week: **Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.**

...to **our counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week:

Melodye Costanza, Harlan Young, Yvette Young, Alicia Perez, Sharon Cissell, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Frank Russo and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Carole Miller, Dave Costanza, Kathy Augusta and Vince Augusta.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who keep watch over our vehicles during the weekend liturgies: **Don Benson, Steve Rojek and Bob Goncalves.**

Priests' group wants significant change in priest formation process

Priests need to be servants, grounded in Vatican II principles, association says
Apr 10, 2018

by [Dan Morris-Young](#)

The Association of U.S. Catholic Priests has called on the U.S. bishops to assure that teachings of the Second Vatican Council become the bedrock of U.S. priestly formation programs, not "little more than an historical footnote" or "a distortive moment in the Church's pilgrimage through time."

On March 29, the national group released the text of a 5,000-plus-word statement outlining "five overriding concerns" about priestly formation. The [document and an explanatory letter](#) was sent to Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, in late January.

Tobin chairs the U.S. bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, which is overseeing revision of the Program of Priestly Formation for U.S. seminaries, part of a global effort mandated by the Vatican.

Titled "Preparing the Sixth Edition of the Program of Priestly Formation: Five Overriding Concerns," the priests' association declaration argues that "in-depth revision" must be made in priest formation to meet "the significant challenges facing the church in the United States."

Those challenges, the document asserts, include:

- Departure of millions of Catholics from active participation and membership in the church

- Decline in the number of active priests and of candidates for the priesthood
- Fewer converts, fewer church weddings, fewer baptisms, fewer parishes
- Growing identification of Americans as "spiritual" rather than "religious."

The five focus areas of the document — each with observations, concerns and proposals — are:

- Faithfulness to Vatican II
- Call to service
- Pastoral model of priestly formation
- Psychosexual development and celibacy
- Discernment processes and faculty formation

The statement underscores that "the pastoral values of Vatican II need to permeate and be consistently and persistently affirmed" and that these "values should serve as the basis and of all phases of priestly formation."

Key Vatican II tenets emphasized include "grounding in the Scriptures, conversion of heart in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, the church as the People of God, the universal call to holiness, the central role of the laity, vernacular worship, the church's mission to the world, dialog and consensus building, subsidiarity, and ecumenical-interfaith-interreligious commitment."

Among comments and suggestions within the document are:

- Insistence that first and foremost priests "need to see themselves as servants of God and of God's people"

- A strong call that women play a much larger role in pastoral formation, in discerning seminarians' "suitability for ordination," and as theological faculty and spiritual directors
- Description of "the typical seminary community" as "significantly buffered if not larger isolated from the larger world and parish-level," and arguing that "the diocesan presbyterate and parish communities" provide "better community contexts for forming a candidate for servant priesthood"
- Criticism of the current Program of Priestly Formation as "overly focused on spiritual, philosophical and theological abstractions" and in effect training "candidates for priesthood ... to be theologians rather than 'pastors' "
- Extensive observations on the "psychosexual development" of priest candidates in areas including celibacy, sexual orientation and relating to future pastoral work, and a summation that "human sexuality is too complex for the priestly formation system alone to assure healthy and mature celibate priests"
- Concern "that the way the current Program of Priestly Formation has been implemented in many seminaries has more often than not resulted in priests who do not see themselves as Christ-like servants of God's people" in ways "contrary to a Vatican II understanding of the call to pastoral service" which, in turn,

fosters "a sense of distance, separation, elitism, clericalism, insensitivity and superiority, all of which have been critiqued by Pope Francis"

The sixth edition of the U.S.-focused Program of Priestly Formation is expected to be submitted for approval at the bishops' general assembly in November 2019.

The Association of U.S. Catholic Priests (AUSCP) "who worked together in writing the document have decades of experience in seminary teaching and administration as well as in parish ministry and chaplaincies" along with "advanced degrees and many years in seminary education and formation," it stated in a March 29 press release.

Sulpician Fr. Ronald Chochol chaired the team and signed the letter to Tobin along with Fr. Bernard Robert Bonnot of the Youngstown, Ohio, Diocese who heads the AUSCP leadership team, and five others who worked on the priest formation document.

Chochol has been a seminary professor and rector, an academic dean at the former Weston Jesuit School of Theology (now a part of Boston College) and an academic dean at St. Meinrad School of Theology in Indiana. He also taught at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

Other members of the AUSCP statement's writing group included two Vincentians, Fr. Louis Arceneaux and Fr. Daniel Kearns, and four diocesan priests: Bonnot; Fr. Kevin Clinton of St. Paul-Minneapolis, Minnesota;

Fr. Thomas Ivory of Newark, New Jersey; and Fr. Martin Marren of Chicago, Illinois, according to the organization's media release.

Founded in 2011 and based in Tiffin, Ohio, the AUSCP has about 1,200 priest members in addition to about 120 enrolled supporters.

According to Bonnot, the effort to address priest formation surfaced at the organization's national assembly last June in Atlanta.

"When it was announced that the Vatican was requiring this, it was proposed to our 2017 assembly that we should contribute to the process," Bonnot told NCR via email.

"To my surprise," he continued, "it was not only endorsed by the assembly, but selected as one of our top three priorities for the year. A working committee was established. It worked diligently and came up with the report at the end of January."

To date, no response has been received from Tobin or any members of the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, Bonnot and Chochol emailed jointly.

Early response to the AUSCP discourse, the priests said, has been "universally positive, enthusiastic even, and grateful that someone is speaking up and saying what we have recommended, especially since the 'someone' is priests ... with seminary teaching experience."

Bonnot said he was "surprised" that the "project and process" of updating the

priestly formation system "seem to be very low profile."

The AUSCP "was not asked to participate," he said. "We are not aware of whom has been asked. It has been hard to learn much at all about the process."

Request for comment from Tobin through the Newark Archdiocese's communication office had not been acknowledged by press deadline.

Fr. John Kartje, however, the rector/president of one of the largest U.S. seminaries, lauded the intent and spirit of the AUSCP statement.

Although not familiar with the AUSCP, Mundelein Seminary's Kartje said, "I definitely share the sense that this is a unique time for the seminary system worldwide, and there is a strong tone in the new *Ratio Fundamentalis* that there is an ability to really add on" to its direction.

In late 2016, the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy issued a document on priesthood, [*Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*](#) ("The Gift of the Priestly Vocation").

Kartje said he had not "gone through the [AUSCP] document with a fine-toothed comb," but supported its emphasis on pastoral education of priests at the grass-roots level, describing parish-based experience as "a key piece of formation."

Mundelein and other major seminaries, he said, are increasingly developing "partnerships with parishes" and other real-life outreach ministries "where men

are receiving a significant amount of formation through exposure and work with parishes, working with men and women, ordained and lay."

It was not clear to him, Kartje said, to what degree the AUSCP authors were up to speed on such developments in U.S. seminary programs.

Similarly, he said, modern U.S. seminaries do significantly employ behavioral sciences in evaluating and educating seminarians, which seems to support the AUSCP call for a robust evaluation of psychosexual formation.

The AUSCP charged: "Priestly formation programs do not adequately engage experienced professionals, both men and women, who can speak comfortably, are aware of realistic and wholesome human sexual expression and can assist candidates in their personal and honest understanding of their sexuality."

The current Program of Priestly Formation "proposes that preparation for celibacy is one of the primary aims of the human formation program," the AUSCP statement says. "We consider this section of the current PPF an Achilles' heel of the Human Formation section and of the entire document. The seminary faculty needs to guard against judging that they have the power by themselves to 'manufacture' psychosexual development. Avoidance, superficiality and coercion do not create an environment for the 'discernment of spirits' by either the candidates or the formation faculty."

Kartje indicated that the AUSCP and major U.S. seminaries might be on the

same page when it comes to thorough, standardized training for persons to be effective counselors and formation directors.

Recently, he said, several major seminaries joined to form a council that will, among other things, serve as a kind of school for "formators," persons who work in various aspects of evaluation and formation of priesthood candidates.

[Dan Morris-Young is NCR's West Coast correspondent. His email is dmyoung@ncronline.org.]

