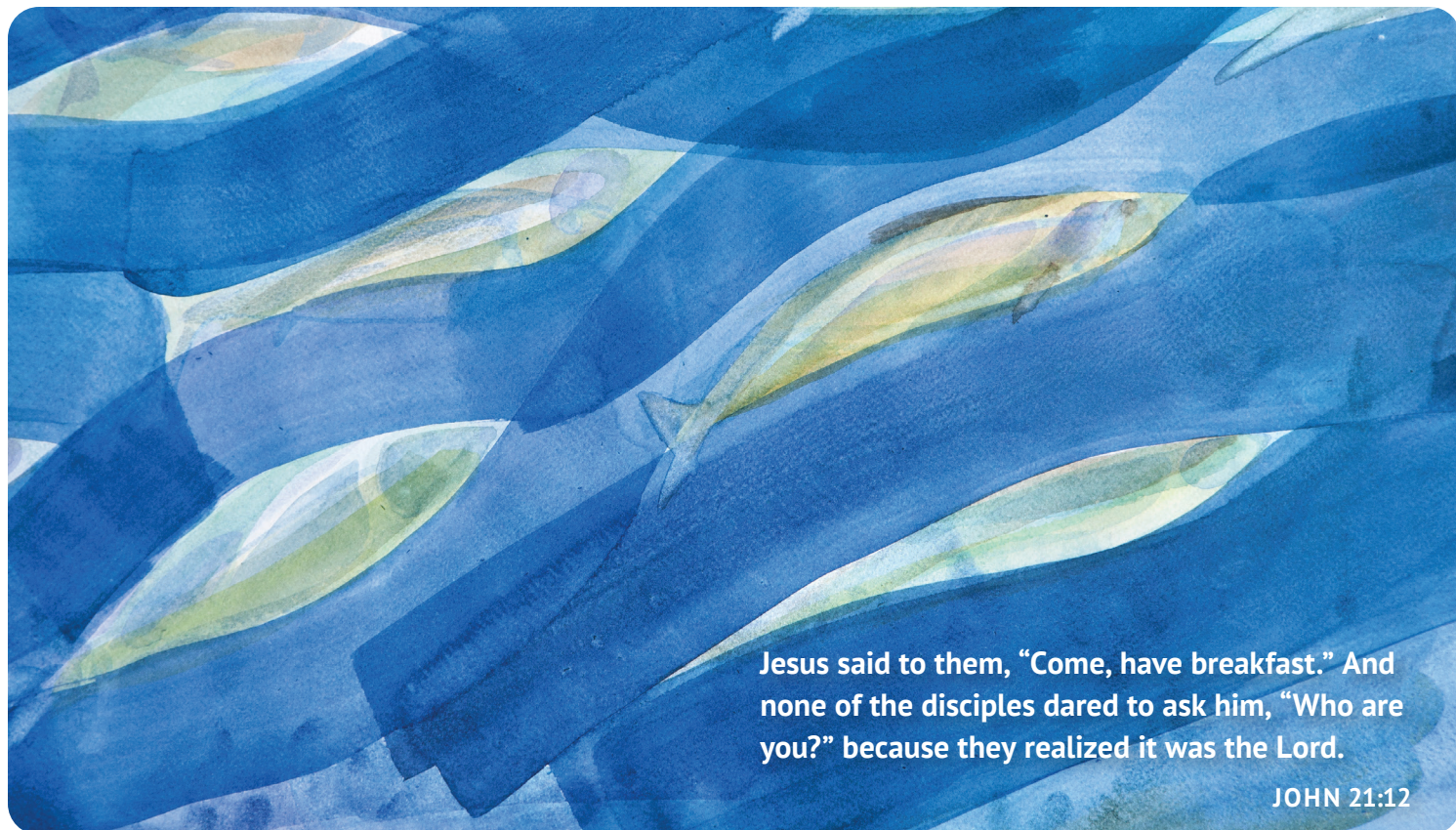




Jesus said to them, “Come, have breakfast.” And none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they realized it was the Lord.

JOHN 21:12

The Abundance

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Twenty-five years ago, when Carl was about eighteen years old, he asked me how he would know when he had truly fallen in love. How would he know that it wasn't simply infatuation or passion and that she was the right person? Today, Carl tells me that I said something to him about recognizing that if you have to ask the question, it probably isn't love; it is probably the woman who best captures the most attractive aspects of all the women he has ever dated, liked, or loved.

For the next twenty years or so, Carl never seemed to find that love he was seeking—until one day, it happened. He fell in love and got married. Five years later, I asked Carl if it was indeed love. He said he believed it was, even though during those years of empty seeking, he thought true love would never come to him. He also said he's convinced that it was the hand of God that brought them together. Of that, he has no doubts.

In its own way, Carl's story is really the story of Peter and his friends going fishing and finding nothing all night long. Then, at dawn, a voice from the shore suggests that they try the other side of the boat. Lo and behold, an abundance appears where there had been only emptiness. That's when Peter and his friends realize, “It is the Lord!” For us, too, we have those moments when we recognize God's hand in our lives. ●

Reflect

Is there a hole in my life that's waiting to be filled? Where am I looking?

Dear Padre,

I committed some grave sins many years ago, and I have been to confession to confess and be absolved, but I still feel guilty. Do I need to confess again?

Absolutely not. There is no need to confess your sins again. This is not required, and it may indicate a lack of faith in the power of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Thankfully, the sacrament does not require perfection.

It does not require any additional action on your part other than to be open to the movement of the Spirit of God.

Forgiveness is a gift from God. It is not something you merit. It is not something you earn. And there is no sin so terrible that God cannot forgive. Rather, it is a blessing you accept gratefully, thankfully, and with a profound knowledge and respect for the mercy of God at work in your life. To confess your sins again and again does nothing except make you feel more guilty. It is a way of punishing yourself; a futile attempt to try to earn what has been freely given. A better use of your time and energy would be to discover a way to remind yourself, not of guilt or imperfection, but of the love God has for you. It is indeed awesome and amazing, as the song so accurately celebrates: “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.” ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to **DearPadre.org** to send your question and to learn more about **Dear Padre**.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
May 5	May 6	May 7	May 8	May 9	May 10	May 11
Easter Weekday	Easter Weekday	Easter Weekday	Easter Weekday	Easter Weekday	Easter Weekday	Fourth Sunday of Easter
Acts 6:8–15	Acts 7:51–8:1a	Acts 8:1b–8	Acts 8:26–40	Acts 9:1–20	Acts 9:31–42	Acts 13:14, 43–52
Jn 6:22–29	Jn 6:30–35	Jn 6:35–40	Jn 6:44–51	Jn 6:52–59	Jn 6:60–69	Rv 7:9, 14b–17 Jn 10:27–30



SARAVUTPICS / SHUTTERSTOCK

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Brothers and sisters, when our nets are empty in life, it is not the time to feel sorry for ourselves, to take our minds off things, to return to old pastimes. It is time to begin again with Jesus, it is time to find the courage to begin again, it is time to put out to sea again with Jesus.

REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 1, 2022