

# THE PASTOR'S POST

## THE POPE'S WOUNDS

Dear Parish Family

Happy Easter! We conclude the Easter octave today...and continue on our journey through the great 50 days of Easter. This is a time of great joy for us as Catholics, a joy we pray moves us through the difficult and challenging moments of our times, in the same way it does in the Gospel today.

Many preachers, scholars, Fathers and Mothers of the early Church, and commentators remark about Jesus returning wounded. There is much for us to pray with there, particularly as we come mindful of our own struggles and pains. Those wounds become entry points for us, I hope. The resurrected and glorified Jesus returns to the Upper Room wounded. The wounds remain. Transformed, yes! Disappeared, no. Maybe a reminder for you and for me when we feel our wounds have taken hold or that there has not been the healing or restoration we have wanted, we search more. The existence of wounds does not mean that transformation is not taking hold.

I think in these days of Pope Francis and Pope Leo. Pope Francis died on the Monday after Easter last year (a different date) and since that time the Church and the world has been coming to know Pope Leo XIV. It is interesting for those whose first language is English to hear the Holy Father speak in a language most clear to us. Like Pope Francis, Pope Leo is speaking clearly. I hope you and I are listening. He is not only speaking clearly in English, he is speaking clearly in the language of the Gospel. Can I share two areas of woundedness Pope Leo has been addressing lately?



First, Pope Leo has called the world to peace, unafraid to speak the words of the Gospel clearly. Last night, he said, "Today, as we all know, there has also been this threat against the entire people of Iran. And this is truly unacceptable! There are certainly issues of international law here, but even more, it is a moral question concerning the good of the people as a whole, in its entirety...Let's remember, especially, the innocent: children, the elderly, the sick, so many people who have already become, or will become, victims of this continued warfare—and to remind all that attacks on civilian

infrastructure are against international law, and that they are also a sign of the hatred, division, and destruction that the human being is capable of." Pope Leo calls us to prayer and to action. In our pursuit for the sacredness of all human life, in our pursuit for peace, we must speak up and out trying to bring about change.

Let this be our prayer this week - yes for an end to war but even more so for our action and engagement.

Second, I want to share with you about the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

(<https://www.popesprayer.va/>; QR



Code on this page too!). It is a powerful tool that has helped my prayer in these years with different prayers and suggestions. In addition, each month the Pope offers a prayer intention for each of us to pray. There is usually a video and some suggestions for further prayer. This month, the prayer intention is for priests in crisis. Wow, in the midst of all that is happening in our world, the pope is aware of the "struggles and wounds" of priests and is calling us to prayer.

I always say, especially when asked by young people about priesthood, that to be a priest is an awesome life - but it is not an easy one. Like each and every person, priests struggle with the "everyday" moments of life. I'm sure, too, that some of your temptations and struggles are mine as well. And we have seen priests struggle and even take leave, even from our own parish. And in our history as a local and global church, we know the wound of abuse, the abuse of power, cover up and scandal.

Pope Leo is on to something here. So this month, can you take time to pray for a priest, here at St. Brigid's or in another place, that God will bring them the strength, consolation and peace they need? I would definitely not be a priest today if it were not for the prayers of the people God has put in my life.

So this week, let the words and the prayers of the Pope lead us to and through some of those places of woundedness. Confident that the resurrection changes all things, we know we can come through these moments of pain, even if a scar remains.

Please pray for me. I promise the same.

*Featherman*

