

Pope Francis Angelus 19 March 2025

With this catechesis we will begin to contemplate some of the encounters narrated in the Gospels, to understand the way Jesus gives hope. Indeed, they are encounters that enlighten life and bring hope. It can happen, for example, that someone helps us to see a difficulty or a problem we are experiencing from a different perspective; or it can happen that someone simply gives us a word that makes us feel that we are not alone in the pain we are going through. At times there can even be silent encounters, in which one does not say anything, and yet those moments help us to get back on track.

The first encounter I would like to look at is that of Jesus with Nicodemus, narrated in chapter 3 of the Gospel of John. I will start with this episode because Nicodemus is a man who, with his history, shows that it is possible to emerge from darkness and find the courage to follow Christ. Nicodemus goes to Jesus at night: it is an unusual time for a meeting. In John's language, temporal references often have symbolic value: here the night probably refers to what is in the heart of Nicodemus. He is a man who finds himself in the darkness of doubt, in that darkness that we experience when we no longer understand what is happening in our lives and do not see the way forward clearly.

If you are in the dark, of course you seek the light. And John, at the beginning of his Gospel, writes: "The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world" (1:9). Nicodemus therefore seeks Jesus because he has sensed that He can illuminate the darkness of his heart. However, the Gospel tells us that Nicodemus does not immediately understand what Jesus is saying to him. And so we see that there are many misunderstandings in this dialogue, and also a lot of irony, which is a characteristic of the evangelist John. Nicodemus does not understand what Jesus is telling him because he continues to think with his own logic and categories. He is a man with a well-defined personality; he has a public role, he is one of the leaders of the Jews. But probably something no longer adds up for him. Nicodemus senses that something no longer works in his life. He feels the need to change, but he does not know where to begin. This happens to all of us in some phases of life. If we do not accept to change, if we close ourselves up in inflexibility, in habits or our ways of thinking, we risk dying. Life resides in the capacity to change to find a new way to love. Indeed, Jesus speaks to Nicodemus of a *new birth*, which is not only possible, but even necessary at certain moments in our journey. To tell the truth, the expression used in the text is already ambivalent in itself, because *anōthen* (ἀνωθεν) can be translated as either "from above" or "again". Slowly, Nicodemus will understand that these two meanings go together: if we allow the Holy Spirit to generate new life in us, we will be born again. We will rediscover that life, which was perhaps fading in us.

I have chosen to begin with Nicodemus also because he is a man who, with his very life, shows that this change is possible. Nicodemus is able to do it: in the end he will be among those who go to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus (cf. *Jn* 19:39)! Nicodemus has finally *come to the light*, he is reborn, and he no longer needs to stay in the night. Changes sometimes frighten us. On the one hand they attract us, at times we desire them, but on the other we would prefer to remain in comfort. Therefore the Spirit encourages us to face these fears. Jesus reminds Nicodemus – who is a teacher in Israel – that even the Israelites were afraid when they were walking in the desert. And they focused so much on their worries that at a certain point those fears took the form of venomous snakes (cf. *Nm* 21:4-9). In order to be freed, they had to look at the copper serpent that Moses had placed on a pole, that is, they had to look up and stand before the object that represented their fears. Only by looking into the face of that which frightens us can we begin to be set free.

Nicodemus, like all of us, can look at the Crucified One: the One who defeated death, the root of all our fears. Let us also lift our gaze to the One they pierced, let us also be met by Jesus. In Him we find the hope to face the changes in our lives and be born again.

Our Lady of Divine Providence ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



HOLY MASS

Saturday: 05:30 pm English, Church.

Sunday: 09:00 am English, Church.
10:30 am Creole, Church.
12:30 pm Spanish, Church.

Weekdays: 05:30 pm English, Upper Room, St. Maria Goretti.

Fridays: 04:00 pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Rosary.

05:30 pm Upper Room St. Maria Goretti.

SCHEDULE OF SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: Contact one of the priests in person.

1st Confession: 13 June, 2025.
1st Communions: 22 June, 2025.

Confirmations: To be confirmed.

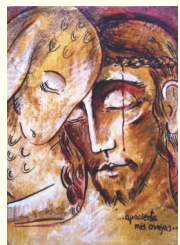
Marriage: Call the parish office for preparation before setting a fixed date.

Anointing of the Sick: Upon request.

Confessions: Everyday before Mass or by appointment.

Today is Laetare Sunday which means "Rejoice Sunday." In the middle of Lent the church gives us a break, so to speak. This is due to the possibility of seeing our sins and getting overwhelmed by them. However, the gospel of today is the prodigal son. A sinner if ever there was one! It is through His sins that he discovers a whole lot of things. One that he is a great sinner and that he is totally unworthy of his Father's love. Also that he has learned a most important lesson and that is, that sin does not taste sweet. Instead it tastes very bitter. These are valuable lessons for everyone and necessary to have, in order to live a truly Christian life. So, if you can relate to this guy, well and good but the problem is most of us are not like him. We are more like the elder brother. How many times have church going people told me, "But Father I am a good person!" Without realizing what Jesus himself says when he is called 'Good' by the rich young man. Jesus says, "No one is good but God alone." Without realising it, the truth comes out. You are the elder brother. "I don't do big sins and I'm not like those really mean and nasty people across the street or my sister who is stingy or my neighbor who keeps me awake with the loud music etc. or the people at work who cheat on their timesheets. Let us question ourselves;" "Why do I need to feel better than these people?" Deep down I do not accept my own sinfulness and that's why I look at the other people's sins. This is the elder brother in today's Gospel who does not even recognize his brother as his brother but calls him "your son" to their father. May we all have the grace to face our sins and so become repentant and receive the Lord's immense mercy and hence, "Rejoice" and grow in mercy for the other poor sinners around us, who put up with our sins.

Fr. Paul



"Come to me, all who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest."
(Matthew 11:28)

**Are you suffering and don't know why?
Worried about the future?
Do you feel alone ?**

Come and Listen God Loves You!

Catechesis for Youth and Adults
(13 years old and up)

**Mondays and Thursdays
at 7:00pm**
(Free babysitting available)

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LENTEN SCHEDULE

Morning Prayer
Monday to Friday 6:20am
St. Maria Goretti, Upper Room

Stations of the Cross
Every Friday during Lent after the daily mass, 6:00pm in the Church.

WORLD YOUTH DAY

PLEASE HELP US GET THERE
(around 50 young & adults \$3,000 e/a)

Any help God will reward you a hundred fold, not only spiritually but materially as well.

Parish Events 30 March — 6 April

Holy Mass: 09:00 am, 10:30 am and 12:30 pm.

04:00pm Coeur de Marie Children's group.
05:00pm Fraternite, Red Room.
05:00pm Creole Youth Choir practice.
05:30pm Sacre Coeur de Jesus, P. Hall.
06:00pm Choeur D'hommes 1st and 3rd Sunday at church.

Monday

05:30 pm Daily Mass, SMG, Upper Room
07:00pm Catechesis Upper Room

Tuesday

05:30pm Daily Mass, SMG, Upper Room
07:00pm First English Blue Chapel
07:00pm Second English Red Room
07:00pm Spanish SMG, Upper Room

Wednesday St. Francis of Paola

05:30pm Daily Mass., SMG Upper Room
07:00pm Third English SMG, Upper Room
07:00pm Fourth English Red Room
07:00pm Fifth English Blue Chapel
07:00pm Creole Blessed Sac. Chapel

Thursday

05:30 pm Daily Mass SMG, Upper Room
07:00pm Catechesis SMG, Upper Room

Friday St. Isidore, Bishop

04:00 pm Adoration, SMG upstairs
05:30 pm Daily Mass, SMG upstairs
06:00 pm Stations of the Cross in the Church

Saturday St. Vincent Ferrer

05:30 pm Mass in Church
07:00 pm Eucharist NCW



School Notes

Holy Family Academy
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The fifth grade students engaged in a productive and educational study of the human heart this week. Their learning was enhanced by the creation of detailed heart models, demonstrating their comprehension and creativity!



This past March 25th, as we celebrated the Annunciation, we contemplated the beautiful connection between that day and Christmas. Nine months prior to Christ's birth, we remembered Mary's acceptance of God's will which reminded us that this obedience brings forth salvation.

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SPONSORS / BENEFACTORS

We continue to look for donations and sponsors to support our **Scholarship Program** and help the school with necessary supplies.

Your sponsorship payment can be done through direct deposit or bank transfer or by donating any of the items below.

- Projectors and projector screens
- Projector stands
- Art Supplies
- Printing Paper
- Sport supplies
- Asthma Inhalers & AED

Click on our [Wish List](#) or scan the code to see more!

