

From the PASTOR'S DESK



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Every human life comes to a point, a simple *yes* or *no*. There is a unity in our lives, but we cannot grasp that unity for ourselves. We cannot be sure what our final decision will be. Even as we approach the end of life there is still doubt. The last few days, hours, and minutes may be significant. Time is elastic. A lot can happen in a very short time.

On Easter Sunday, with wavering breath, Pope Francis gave his last blessing to the City of Rome and the whole world. *Urbi et Orbi*. The suffering Pope, the 266th Vicar of Christ, assured us that Jesus Christ has risen.

There is a unity in every human life. Today's Gospel can be seen as a unity in the life of Peter. There are three parts to the story: the miraculous catch of fish, Jesus asking Peter if he loves Him, and the odd prophecy of his death. The prophecy is odd because it does not describe what we know from tradition about Peter's death. Peter was nailed to an upside down cross. *When you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.* This depiction of an old man being cared for, losing his freedom, and becoming completely dependent on others as he approaches death fits Francis and Benedict and John Paul.

The miracle of the fish is a reference to the past and to the future. St. Peter and his successors became a new kind of fisherman. The miraculous catch is the work of our Lord. It is the repetition of Peter's past life and profession. It is done in obedience to Christ. When we are in the presence of Christ, what we have been, what we are now, and what we will be are one.

Then there is the question of love. The question is couched in terms of the present. *Do you love me?* The present contains the past and the future. When we are in the presence of Christ, what we have been, what we are now, and what we will be are one. We all know Peter's past, his failure at the moment of the cross. That failure echoes through the history of the Church. But we know that Peter is redeemed and with Christ forever. Love is always a question for now. *Yes* or *no*. No matter how our death comes to us, when we follow Him, that death gives glory to God.

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Pastor

