

Dear Friends

In these days leading up to Ascension day we recall the risen Christ appearing in so many settings to his disciples in Jerusalem and in Galilee.

Let us pray today's Collect:

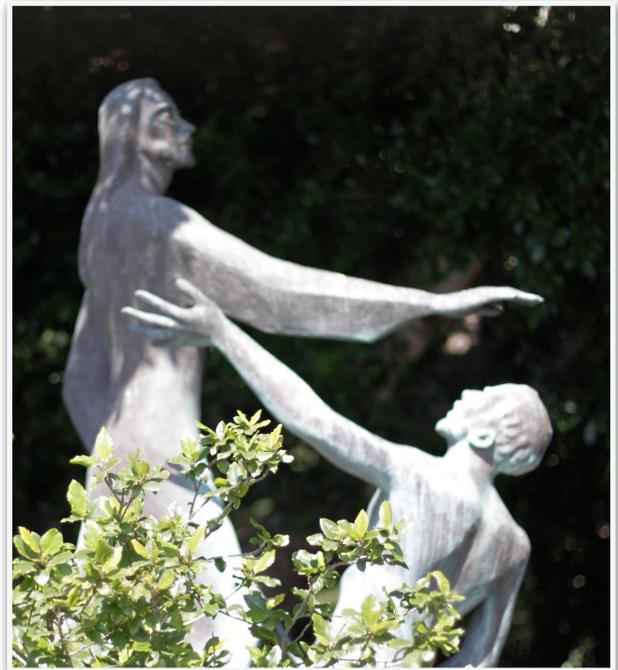
**Almighty God,
who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ
have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life:
grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires,
so by your continual help
we may bring them to good effect;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen**

Let us face it: although open to good desires, we sometimes stumble. We may not always desire the best for others. There are times when we dwell too much on our own needs and not enough time thinking about and helping others.

Look at Peter who denied three times that he had been with Jesus during the night of Jesus' arrest.

Jesus knows our minds. He predicted that Peter would deny him. Carrying that shame, Peter must have felt terrible and worthless.

In one of Christ's resurrection appearances in Galilee, he appeared on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias - see John chapter 21. Jesus knew just how wretched Peter felt. He forgave Peter: matching his three denials with three affirmations: a simple question. "Do you love me?" Peter affirmed his love for Jesus three times, to which Jesus replied simply: "Follow me". Forgiveness calls for positive, affirming action.



Like Peter but in hopefully smaller ways, from time to time we need Christ's forgiveness. We too need restoration and positive action. To do rather than to be tended to.

Have faith: God does forgive if we turn to him and confess. Alleluia! Then we can be open and inspired by the Holy Spirit with good desires for others. Amen

May you stay safe and be at peace this day.