

Resurrection and Renewal in Light of the Resurrection

By Veronica G. Martinez-Acosta, Professor of Biology

Reflecting on the Gospel for the Second Sunday of Easter, John 20:19-31, describing Jesus's appearance to the disciples one week after He has risen, I cannot help but put myself physically and emotionally in the sandals of the disciples.

Just as we find ourselves quarantined in our homes, the disciples were locked in a room, hidden, in fear of the enemies of Jesus. For many of us, there is also the emotion that surrounds us in our current situation — the fear of the unknown. We really do not know how long we must wait before we feel “safe” again to venture freely back into the world.

Similarly, the events leading up to the crucifixion of Christ caused the disciples much confusion and uncertainty. Most importantly, those events brought up many questions and longings for truth. How were they to continue the work of their teacher?

Yet Jesus came offering peace. He brought an end to their confusion and an end to the questions of what they were charged to do. He said very clearly and concisely: “As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.” With these words and His sending the Holy Spirit, Jesus empowered the disciples to proclaim His word and continue His work.

This passage in the Gospel also speaks to my work — indeed, *our* work — in the UIW community. Our responsibility is to serve our students and remind them of our shared goals. I can show them that I, too, am uncertain, but with the guidance of our faith, and through the relationships we have established, we can work together to continue learning. Ultimately, we are sharing our knowledge and faith with those who are still fearful.

Pope Francis invited us this past week to reflect on our doubts and on our fears: “Many doubts disappear because we feel the presence of God and the truth of the Gospel in love, which — without our deserving it — lives in us, and we share it with others.”

Pope Francis's call to reflection on this Sunday's Gospel evokes our call to serve just like Jesus commissioned His disciples to do in John's verses. As I respond to that call and emerge from my fears, I profess my strength in Him. With that resolve, I wish peace for all of us and invite you, my colleagues, to look forward to the day we can come together again on campus.

I leave you with a poem that echoes the teaching of this Sunday's Gospel.

blessing the boats

By [Lucille Clifton](#) (1936-2010, at St. Mary's)

may the tide
that is entering even now
the lip of our understanding
carry you out
beyond the face of fear
may you kiss
the wind then turn from it
certain that it will
love your back may you
open your eyes to water
water waving forever
and may you in your innocence
sail through this to that