



## THE PATIENCE OF JESUS FOR HIS DISCIPLES

*For months the disciples, Matthew, John, Peter, Thomas, and the others, spent great times with Jesus. You remember all the miracles they saw. But the recent events have shaken them up a lot. The mood has changed, some are happy, others rather sad. One of them can't believe what he's told. Pierre is unhappy, he thinks about what he did, and he is ashamed.*

*But, I won't tell you more. Listen carefully and you can answer my question: What does Jesus do? You will find this account in the Gospel of John at the beginning of chapter 21.*



When Jesus appeared to the disciples on Easter Sunday evening, there was one absent. So the others told him what had happened.

- Thomas! We have seen the Lord! He is risen!

- Ah, that's not possible! Thomas answers. Me, unless I see with my own eyes the nail marks in his hands, and stick my finger there and unless I put my hand in His side, I won't believe.

Eight days later, they are reunited again in the same locked room. Suddenly, Jesus is there, standing among them. He speaks to a particular disciple.



- Thomas! Look at my hands! Put your finger here in the nail mark! Stretch also your hand and put it in my side. You see, it's me! So, Thomas, stop doubting and believe that I am alive.

- You are my Lord and my God! Thomas cries, bowing.

- Thomas, you believe because you saw me, Jesus says to him, but let me tell you, that all those who will believe in me, without having ever seen me, those will be really happy.

A little later, they return to Galilee. Some of them meet on the bank of the lake of Tiberias.

- Tonight I'm going fishing, says Peter.

- We're coming with you, say the others.

They leave for a whole night. They're going to throw the nets again and again. It's a very tiring job.

The next morning, exhausted and discouraged, they say to each other:



- Well! All that for nothing! We worked all night and took nothing. It's time to come back. Now that the sun is rising, it's over.

They see a man there, standing on the shore.

- Well, friends! He tells them. Have you caught any fish?

- No! Nothing at all!

- Well throw the net on the right side of the boat. You will have a good fishing!

A good fishing! It's hard to believe! But they obey and lo and behold the net sinks in and begins to swarm with fish.



- But it's amazing! They say, it's so full we can't get it on board!

John remembers. They have already experienced a similar miracle. It was the day when Jesus said to Peter: *"You will be a fisher of men!"*

He walks up to Peter and says to him:

- It's the Lord!

Peter immediately jumps overboard and starts swimming. The others follow him more slowly with the boat, pulling the net full of fish. The stranger has prepared a fire on which some fish is already

grilling. This delicious scent awakens the appetite of the fishermen:

- Bring me some more fish! He tells them.

They pull the heavy net onto the shore. There are so many fish that it should tear but no, the net is holding on.

- Let's see how many there are! They say.

They begin to count the shiny, dripping fish that squirm on the planks of the boat.



- 10, 15, 32, 54, 90, 100, 125! And here is the last! 153! 153 big fish!

- Come on, come and eat now! The man tells them. It's ready!

He gives them the bread and the fish that He has baked for them. Nobody asks him: «*But who are you?*». They all recognized Him. This is the third time that Jesus has shown Himself to them since He rose from the dead. How happy they are to share this food in the calm and fresh morning air in the presence of the Lord! It's an unforgettable moment!

When the meal is over, Jesus addresses Peter:

- Do you love me more than the others? He asks him.

- Yes, Lord! Peter answers, troubled. You know I love you.

- You'll take care of my lambs.



- Peter, do you love me? Jesus asks again.

- Yes, Lord! You know I love you.

- You will be the shepherd of my sheep.

And for the third time, Jesus asks him:

- Peter, do you love me?

Peter becomes very sad because it is the third time that Jesus has asked him the same question. He is ashamed. Indeed, he has never forgotten

that terrible night when he declared on three occasions not to know the Lord. He was a coward, three times he denied knowing him after he saying so proudly that he loved Him more than everyone else and that he was ready to die for him. Pierre is miserable. He sincerely regrets having betrayed the One he loves with all his heart.

- Lord! He answers humbly. You know everything; I have nothing to hide from you. You know that I Love you.

- So, far, Jesus says to him, you did what you wanted, you went where you wanted but I know that now you are ready to obey and serve me. I have a mission for you. You will be a fisherman of men. You will tell them that they must repent and believe that I am dead and resurrected so that they may be forgiven and like a faithful shepherd, you will take care of those who want to follow me.

Peter is happy and at peace, he knows that Jesus has forgiven him and that He is offering him another life. He will serve his Lord with strength and courage all his life. He's not the same man anymore.

## 1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!



*We asked you: what is Jesus doing? I'm not sure you remember everything, then, here is what I propose to you. Either answer right away or listen the story a second time or you can reread it and then write what Jesus does as you go. You can also do it orally. And if there are several of you, each can respond in turn. Before ending, I leave on your heart the question that Jesus asked Peter: Do you love me? It's up to you to answer it.*

## 4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!



*In the conversation with your children, clearly show the patience and love of Jesus for his disciples despite their doubts, their clumsiness, their fears of others, of their shame. Children also experience moments of doubt. They can be discouraged, feel unworthy of the Lord, yet loving Him and wanting to follow Him but perhaps lacking courage in front of their comrades. Jesus' attitude towards Thomas and towards Peter constitutes a deep encouragement for them as for us.*