



What Is Your Hope?

We have hopes for ourselves and others. We hope for good health, for fulfilling work, for settled lives for our children. As valuable as such hope might be, that is not what Peter is referring to in today's second reading. He is talking about religious hope. Not hope *that*, but hope *in*. Not hope that God will give us what we ask, that God will supply what we cannot accomplish, that God will reward our faithfulness. That is also valid hope, but it is still not religious hope.

Genuine religious hope is hope or trust in God. Period. Trust in God when we have no idea what the future might bring. Trust in God when all our best plans crumble before us. Trust in God when we face the terrors of illness and death. This is a trust or hope for which we do not provide God plans to follow so our needs get met as we think they should be. It is a hope that enables us to place ourselves into the hands of God. Period.

This kind of hope asks for nothing and expects everything. Why? Because we are convinced that God loves us with a passion we can't possibly imagine and, therefore, wants what is best for us. This might seem like an impossible hope, but the reading goes on to list reasons to hope. God's love is exemplified by Jesus Christ, who "suffered for sins...that he might lead you to God" (1 Peter 3:18). Who could ask for more?

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR *Reflection*

- ★ Think of times when you were surprised by God's love.
- ★ Pray for the gift of genuine religious hope.

Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.

1 PETER 3:15



MICHAEL DAMME/SPLASH/ISTOCK

Dear Padre,

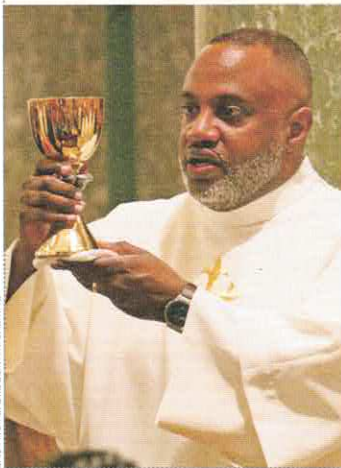
After Mass a friend told me I belonged to “the priesthood of believers.” I’m not a priest! What did she mean?

At baptism, all of us became part of the laity. The word *laity* comes from the Greek word *laos*, which means “people.” The laity are the people of God. As people of God, we all share in the priesthood of Christ. This is why the Church speaks of the “priesthood of all believers,” because when we were baptized we were incorporated into Christ’s priesthood. Each of us is called to exercise our common priesthood within the Church, strengthening and serving each other. The exercise of priesthood means, above all, to serve.

The Church speaks of Jesus as our High Priest, the one who offers himself as the sacrificial animal. Jesus is the priest and victim, offering himself as a sacrifice to God. The priesthood that Jesus exercises is one of self-giving. All those who are called to the priesthood of Christ are called to serve as he did, offering themselves in a spirit of service and love.

This “priesthood of all believers” shouldn’t be confused with the sacrament of Holy Orders, which ordains to the office of bishop, priest, or deacon. These men are called by God and ordained by the Church to exercise the particular ministry of preaching the good news and administering the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. During Mass, the ordained priest represents Christ and also acts on behalf of all the people of God. His sacramental priesthood represents the common priesthood of the whole Church.

—Fr. Paul J. Coury, CSsR
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A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

There are so many people waiting for us to go out and meet them and look at them with the tenderness that we have experienced and received from our relationship with God. That is where our power lies: not in our ideals and in our personal projects, but rather in the strength of his mercy.

—ADDRESS TO THE ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS,
OCTOBER 20, 2016

Calendar

Monday

MAY 18

Easter Weekday

Acts 16:11–15

Jn 15:26—16:4a

Tuesday

MAY 19

Easter Weekday

Acts 16:22–34

Jn 16:5–11

Wednesday

MAY 20

Easter Weekday

Acts 17:15, 22—18:1

Jn 16:12–15

Thursday

MAY 21

Easter Weekday

Acts 18:1–8

Jn 16:16–20

Friday

MAY 22

Easter Weekday

Acts 18:9–18

Jn 16:20–23

Saturday

MAY 23

Easter Weekday

Acts 18:23–28

Jn 16:23b–28

Sunday

MAY 24

The Ascension
of the Lord

Acts 1:1–11

Eph 1:17–23

Mt 28:16–20

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