May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

John begins today’s gospel by telling us that Jesus “*showed himself in this way*” (John 21:1). This was his third appearance. I want invite you to explore the details John gives us in today’s Gospel, that we could recognize the resurrection of Jesus in the details of our own lives.

**“*I am going fishing*”.** The disciples have returned home. They’ve gone back to fishing. They’ve moved from the empty tomb to their boats, from the house in Jerusalem to the familiar waters of the Sea of Tiberias. They’ve traveled about 120 kilometers from the place of Jesus’ resurrection and given themselves to their old routine of fishing. They’ve returned to the same boats, the same nets, the same water, the same work. That’s when and where Jesus “*showed himself.”*

It’s now two weeks after Easter Sunday and I’m betting we’ve all returned to the routine of our lives. That’s when and where we can expect Jesus to show himself to us. Resurrection does not happen apart from the routines of life but in them. Resurrection is not about escaping life but about becoming alive.

**“*Empty Nets*”.** They fished through the darkness but their nets were empty. “*That night they caught nothing*” (John 21:3). They are as empty as their nets. Who here hasn’t experienced that darkness and emptiness? You know what that’s like. You fish, you work, you do your best but you still come up empty. In those times we have come to the limits of our own self-sufficiency. We have nothing to show for our efforts and nothing left to give. We’re empty.

In this picture I hear the echo of Mary’s voice at the wedding in Cana when she said to Jesus, “*They have no wine*” (John 2:3). Empty nets. Empty jars. No wine, no fish, no life. That’s when Jesus “*showed himself*.”

Nets and jars cannot be filled unless they are first emptied. In the same way we can never be filled with Jesus until we are first emptied of ourselves, until we come to recognize the limits of our own self-sufficiency. Jesus shows up when the nets are empty.

So let me ask you this. What are your empty nets today? What wine jars have run dry? Don’t throw the jars away and don’t abandon your nets. They are the very places Jesus is showing himself to you.

**“*Daybreak*”.** Did you notice that all this happens just after daybreak? The darkness does not win. The light always prevails. In the light of this new day, in the light of a full net, Jesus shows himself. “*It is the Lord*” (John 21:7).

This isn’t just about the rising of the sun. It’s about the rising of the Son in the darkness of the disciples’ lives and in the darkness of our own lives. Whatever darkness has overcome you, whatever darkness you might be going through today, that darkness is the circumstances in which Jesus will show himself to you.

**“*Naked Peter*”.** It’s a strange and seemingly unnecessary detail. So, I have to wonder if John isn’t telling us something more than that Peter wasn’t wearing any clothes.

The last time Peter got out of the boat when he said, “*Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water*” (Matthew 14:28). Not this time, however. Today is different. There are no conditions, no demands, no requests for a miracle. Peter is clothing himself with courage, clothing himself with joy, clothing himself with an urgency for Jesus. Fully clothed, he now plunges himself into the waters of new life

What places or circumstances of your life need to be clothed with courage or joy? And if they were how would that change your life? What might you do differently?

**“*A Charcoal Fire*”.** I wonder what Peter thought when he got ashore and saw a charcoal fire. I wonder if he gazed into the flames, lost himself in the past, and remembered that other charcoal fire, the one by which he warmed himself and three times denied Jesus (John 18:17-18). I wonder if Peter felt his guilt. I wonder if he was afraid.

I only wonder these things because that’s often what I’ve done with my guilt, regrets, and betrayals. Maybe you have too. Maybe you know what I am talking about.

Jesus shows himself to us in the charcoal fires of our guilt, regrets, and betrayals. Bread of Life himself has prepared a place for us at the table, by saying “*Come and have breakfast*”. The last supper has become the first breakfast and the charcoal fire of denial has become a charcoal fire of welcome and invitation.

**“*Breakfast Conversation*”.** “*Do you love me*?” Jesus asks Peter, not once but three times. One question for each of Peter’s denial. Three times Peter gives the same answer, “*Yes, Lord; you know that I love you*.” And I think he did. I think Jesus knew that Peter loved him but Peter needed to know that he loved Jesus. Peter needed to understand that he was not bound to or identified by his past. How many of us also need to hear, understand, and experience that again and again as if for the very first time? That’s another detail or circumstance of our lives in which Jesus is showing himself.

With each question-and-answer Jesus drew Peter from his past and freed him to become himself and to be more fully alive. Isn’t that really what today’s gospel has been about? It’s the same story being told through the many different details and circumstances of our lives. Amen.