

7th Friday of Easter “How do we love Jesus?”
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Just a short reflection today. The Risen Jesus asks Peter three times, “Do you love me?” This is Jesus’ remedy for Peter who denied knowing Jesus three times during the passion. The remedy Jesus offers Peter is asking him three times “do you love me?”

There is something playful going on in the original Greek, if you take a closer look. When Jesus asks, “do you love me” he is using the word “agape”, a word that means unconditional love. When Peter responds, “Yes Lord, you know that I love you”, he uses the word “philos”, indicating friendship love. A good kind of love, to be sure, however, friendship love still has conditions attached. And so Jesus says to Peter, ““Amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.’ He said this signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God.” I interpret this as Jesus saying, “Peter, your love for me is conditional right now, but one day it will be unconditional love.” And this, of course, is what happened, but the Gospel reading also encourages us to ask ourselves what does our love for Jesus look like? Is it conditional love or unconditional love?