

The Key to Living a Holy Life

Fr. Najim

The Key to Living a Holy Life

The name of my blog sometimes frightens me because I fear I've set myself up as someone who knows how to be holy or who knows how to give advice on how to live a holy life. Neither of those are true! The truth is that I don't believe I'm holy or that I have the best advice for living a holy life. However, I believe that my deepest desire is to be holy and that on my best days I aspire to live in union with Jesus. And because I'm a pilgrim on the journey of life like all of you, my dear readers, I like to share my thoughts on how we can together aspire to friendship with Jesus.

In my almost fourteen years as a priest, I've spent countless hours in the confessional and counseling people in so many different situations. Those hours are some of the most fulfilling hours of my life. I've learned many things during those countless hours. But there's a simple piece of advice that I like to give over and over again. It's a piece of advice that I give because it's one that I try to live on a daily basis. This piece of advice, I believe, is the key to living a holy life. What is it? Two words: Begin again.

That's it in a nutshell. I believe the key to living a holy life is the decision to begin again and again with Jesus each day. We're weak. We're tempted. We sin. But God's grace and mercy is greater than our sin. And so we have two choices: we can choose to focus on our temptations and sins or we can choose to focus on Jesus and begin again each day with his love and grace. If we focus on our weaknesses, there's little chance that we'll make progress on the road to holiness; however, if we focus on Jesus and decide to begin again each day, he will strengthen us in perseverance and enable us to grow in virtue.

I love the gospel scene where Peter steps out of the boat to walk toward Jesus who is walking on the water. It perfectly sums up the spiritual life: Distracted by the winds and waves, Peter takes his eyes off of Jesus and begins to sink; but Peter reaches out to Jesus and begs Jesus to save him. What a great lesson! In the winds and waves of life, we must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. And when we feel we can't go on, we simply need to imitate Peter, stretch out our hand, and beg Jesus to save us.

So forget about yesterday or about the mistakes you made today, and simply choose to begin again. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Take his hand and let him lead you.

+ + + + +

This post originally appeared on Father Michael Najim's blog <http://liveholiness.com/> Used with permission.

Art: *Хождение по водам (Walking on Water)*, Ivan Alvazovsky, 1888, PD-US, Wikimedia Commons.

