

3rd Sunday in Easter – Year A 2026

Act 2:14.22-33; Psalm 15; 1st Peter 1:17-21; Luke 24:13-35

*‘Why spend an hour a day in meditation? Because we are living on the surface of our souls, knowing little either of God or our inner self. Our Knowledge is mostly about things, not about destiny. Most of our difficulties and disappointments in life are due to mistakes in our life plans. Having forgotten the purpose of living, we have even doubted even the value of living... our souls are in agony because we are not tending to the fullness of Life, Truth, and Love, which is God’.*¹ These are the words of the Venerable Fulton Sheen.

After reading this I began thinking about the Holy Hour that the Bishops of this country have asked us to hold this Sunday afternoon for ‘A Culture of life’. Why make a Holy Hour? Here are ten reasons:

- 1) Because it is time spent in the Presence of the Lord Himself, nor further reason is needed.
- 2) Because in our busy life it takes considerable time, to shake off ... the worldly cares, which cling to our souls like dust. An hour with Our Lord follows the experience of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. (today’s Gospel) We begin by walking with Our Lord, but our eyes are *‘held fast so that we did not recognize him’*. He converses with our soul as we read the Scriptures. The third is one of sweet intimacy, as when ‘he sat

down at table’ with his disciples. The fourth stage is the full dawning of the mystery of the Eucharist. Our eyes are ‘opened’ and we recognize Him. Finally, we reach the point where we do not want to leave.

- 3) Because Our Lord asked for it. *‘Had you no strength, then, to watch with me even for an hours? ... the spirit is willing enough but the flesh is weak?’* (Mark 14:39)
- 4) Because the Holy Hour keeps a balance between the spiritual and the practical... “action following rest”. Martha walking with Mary... after (an) hour with the Lord, our meditations and resolutions pass from the conscious to the subconscious and then become motives of action. A new spirit begins to pervade our work.
- 5) Because the Holy Hour will make us practice what we preach.... It was written of Our Lord that He *‘set out to do and to teach’* (Acts 1:1) The person who practices the Holy Hour will find that when he teaches, the people will say of him as of the Lord: *All ... were astonished at the gracious words which came from him mouth* (Luke 4:22)
- 6) Because the Holy Hours helps us to make reparation both for the sins of the world and for our own. Black Masses, sacrilegious communions, scandals, militant atheism – who will make up for them? Who will be an Abraham for Sodom, a Mary

On Monday morning I was beginning my Holy Hour by reading today’s Gospel. Finished, for the moment, I put it aside and picked up my new book. And this is what I read: Sheen, Fulton, *The Holy Hour*, (Bishop Sheen Today, Midland). Most of this is taken from Archbishop Sheen, with a

little light editing. But it fits remarkably with the image of Jesus walking and then breaking bread with the disciples. Only the protected space in the company of our Lord will make us fit and accustomed to be in his company.

3rd Sunday in Easter – Year A 2026

for those who have no wine? *'Is it for me to watch over my brother'*. (Gen 4:9). Yes.

- 7) Because it reduces our liability to temptation and weakness. Presenting ourselves before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament is like putting a tubercular patient in good air and sunlight. The virus of our sins cannot long exist in the face of the Light of the world.
- 8) Because the Holy Hour is personal prayer, the person, who limits himself strictly to his official obligation, is like the union man who downs tools the moment the whistle blows. Love begins when duty finishes, ... It is walking the extra mile.... Love is never compelled.²
- 9) Meditation keeps us from seeking an external escape from our worries and miseries. When difficulties arise... there is always a danger that we may look outwards... for release. ... Come back and keep still, and all shall be well with you; in quietness and in confidence lies your strength. No outward escape... is an answer. (Fly to Christ.)
- 10) Finally, because the Holy Hours is necessary for the Church. The sole requirement – *conscious of the presence of God in history in the Old Testament and in the current world* – is the venture of faith, and the reward is the depths of intimacy for those who cultivate His friendship. To abide with Christ is spiritual fellowship.... *'You have only to live on in me, and I will*

live on in you) John 15:4). He wants us in His dwelling: *That you, too, may be where I am* (John 14:3).

Maybe only the house-bound, the sick of the parish and the priest have an hour to spend in precious adoration like this everyday . But you all have 20 minutes each and every day, and if you do not, then get up 20 minutes earlier. If you can, go into, or stand outside a church, before the Blessed sacrament praying and reading scripture. If you can, make a Holy place in your house that is just for you and Jesus. Make a Holy Hour, and dig into the depths of your soul and come to know God.

² *"Would you, too, go away?"* (John 6:68) is weak love, *"Art thou sleeping?"* (Mark 14:37). Is irresponsible love, *"He had great possession* (Matt. 19:22) is selfish love. ... (This personal prayer) It is a give of the cloak when the coat is taken.