



## SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 7, 2024

*St. James Catholic Church*  
*3909 Harrison \* Kansas City, Missouri 64110*

### *Reflection from Fr. Garry Richmeier*

Try to imagine, if you will, a one-sided coin. There is no such thing, and even our imaginations can't picture what that might look like. A coin has to have 2 sides, otherwise it can't exist. It is that way with all of reality -- you can't have black without white, good without bad, pleasant without unpleasant, etc. Without opposite sides, nothing can exist.

That really doesn't make sense to us human beings, and we have a difficult time accepting the fact that opposites are needed for everything to exist. We think it should be possible to eliminate the side that we don't like (the bad, the unpleasant), and be left with only the side we do like (the good, the pleasant). Therefore much of our energy goes to getting rid of the "bad" while preserving the "good." Our legal system operates with this philosophy, as does our medical and psychological professions, and even our religions.

In most religions we are taught at an early age that life's goal is to get rid of sin so what will be left is pure goodness. That sets us up for trying to reach the impossible goal of becoming a one sided coin. Not only do we never reach the goal, but religion often reinforces our "badness" by telling us there is something wrong with us for not reaching the goal. It is a form of "crazy making" that hinders us from really accepting ourselves and others, because no one is the "perfect" one-sided coin.

Instead of wasting so much energy on the impossible task of trying to get rid of the "bad" (including those "bad" people), we could redirect that energy into increasing the good. That is something we can accomplish. When we work for a goal that is possible to reach, we find more peace and contentment, and we stop driving ourselves nuts by trying to do the impossible.

I think this is what Jesus was saying with the parable about not pulling up the weeds growing next to the wheat. The bad cannot be removed without destroying everything. Easter is not about Jesus doing away with suffering, pain, and death. It is about his message of loving (increasing the good) and trusting that God will take care of the rest.