

For The Bulletin Of
April 12, 2015

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER – THE OCTAVE DAY OF EASTER

From Father Robert

What happens when we meet a close family friend whom we've not seen for a long time? We embrace the person warmly. We talk about shared past experiences. We share how our lives have changed. In the midst of this encounter is a deep sense of happiness and peace. Months and perhaps years of separation seem erased as we and our friend encounter each other in the here and now.

It's been three days since the disciples have seen Jesus alive. But it must seem like an eternity to them. The disciples are gathered behind locked doors. They are afraid and they are confused about what to do. So they stay put. They are stuck. They've lost the sense of confidence they had when Jesus was with them. Probably their sense of peace has been shattered as well.

On Easter evening, the risen Jesus appears and shows the disciples "His hands and side." It is Jesus Who makes the first, convincing move to enable the disciples to believe that He has truly risen from the dead. It is He Who wants the disciples to see Him, to regain their confidence and peace. To this end, He bestows upon them the gift of the Holy Spirit. With this gift, the disciples are able to rejoice, to believe that He is truly risen. But this Jesus is not just an old friend who has been absent for a time. The disciples have never before seen this

Jesus. He bears the marks of suffering and death. Yet He is risen, never to die again. He has conquered death for Himself and for us all.

Thomas is a convenient stand-in for all of us as we strive to deepen our belief in the risen Lord. Unlike Thomas, however, we do not literally "see" the risen Lord. Whether we see clearly like the gathered disciples, or only through doubting like Thomas, the risen Jesus is, nevertheless, always present in our midst removing all obstacles to belief. This is also how the risen Lord comes among us: in those in need, in those who reach out in self-giving to help those in need. Going from disbelief to belief is not a mental exercise. It is encountering the risen Lord in the people and circumstances around us. Believing is living faithfully the risen Life Jesus gives us.

Living The Paschal Mystery

Belief always goes beyond what we can prove, and often means we must go out on a limb. Belief in the risen Lord means that we die to self so that we can encounter the risen Jesus around us. This means, at times, that we ourselves might have "nail marks" from being wounded. Dying to self always runs a risk of being vulnerable. So it was with Jesus. Out of His vulnerability, love and self-giving came risen Life! So it will be with us.

The challenge of today's gospel is that we put aside our own fears and embrace belief, with all its consequences. Just as the risen Jesus was relentless in bringing the disciples from disbelief to belief, so is He with us. He is also just as relentless with us as He was with the disciples in bringing them to the cross.

Even after His resurrection, Jesus always challenges us to both dying and rising. Having passed over from our Lenten discipline to Easter rejoicing doesn't mean that we can forget about the dying required for living the paschal mystery. Now, however, our "seeing" is heightened: we have experienced once again Easter joy, a glimpse and promise of the fullness of Life to come. This glimpse of the fullness of Life gives us the confidence to believe, to live the Life given us now, to embrace the risen Jesus.

- The risen Jesus comes to me when...Obstacles that block my believing in His Presence include:
- What helps me grow in my belief in the risen Lord is...My belief needs to deepen because...
- Jesus removes obstacles that keep me from growing in my belief in His continued Presence by...

About Liturgy: The Easter Octave

Two great festivals still retain an octave on the 1969 Revised General Roman Calendar: Christmas and Easter. For eight days we celebrate with great solemnity the joy of the festival and why no other celebration may take the place of these eight days (saints days, etc.).

Eight is an important symbolic number. The early Christians called Sunday the "eighth day." Since our week has seven days, "eighth day" referred to a day beyond the human reckoning of time – beyond time, belonging to the end times. Theologically, this refers to "eschatological" time when Jesus Christ will return in all His glory to gather everything back to God at the end of the

fullness of time. Thus, the Easter octave means more than simply going from one Sunday to the next; it heightens our expectation that the risen Life we celebrate is the same Life that we will one day share with the Trinity in everlasting glory.

"Whit" Sunday

Today is also referred to as "Whit" Sunday or "White Sunday" as it is the last time that the newly-baptized and received wear the white garment signifying their newly-baptized status. They literally "lay aside" the white robe and take their place amongst the Assembly. On behalf of all of us, congratulations to **Genevieve, Pam, and Robert** who now are referred to as "neophytes." From Holy Saturday until Pentecost, they will be a part of the last period of the RCIA (Rite For The Christian Initiation of Adults) which is known as "mystagogia" or the explanation of the sacramental mysteries. We thank God for the gift they are to us this Easter.

First Quarter Financial Report

At each liturgy this weekend, the members of our Finance Council are presenting the First Quarter Financial Report. Copies of the report are being given to all those who are present. I hope you will take the time to thank them for their work and ministry to us and accounting for our Stewardship.

The Divine Mercy Observance

Those who are followers of the Divine Mercy devotion are invited to a celebration of Sung Evening Prayer this afternoon at 3:00 p.m. The psalms of mercy will be sung, **Carolyn Krantz**, one of our Catechists for Adult Faith Formation, will give a reflection, and

images of the Divine Mercy Icon will be blessed. Following Evening Prayer, a reception will take place in our parish hall. We are grateful to **Bobbie Ocang and Steve Andreatta** for arranging for this observance.

High School Confirmation

This coming Saturday, April 18th, our High School students will celebrate and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Cathedral at 10:00 a.m. Please keep them in your prayers as they prepare to complete their initiation as adult members of our faith community. Their photographs and names are on the poster in the narthex.

Caring Hands Appeal

Next weekend at each liturgy, **Linda Groobin** from Caring Hands Ministry will be present to make an appeal for more volunteers to share in this outreach to seniors. Please begin to pray during the days of the coming week to discern if God is calling you to be a part of this vital outreach. Please welcome Linda warmly to our faith community.

CROP Hunger Walk

I hope you will join us for the Annual Crop Hunger Walk next Sunday afternoon, April 19th. Registration begins at 2:30 p.m. and the walk begins at 3:00 p.m. The walk begins and concludes at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church on San Jose Avenue. Many thanks for your support.

Good Shepherd Sunday

On Sunday, April 26th, The Fourth Sunday of Easter, also known as "Good Shepherd" Sunday, our adopted seminarian, **Mario Rizzo**, will be present to share with us his path to the priesthood. He will be honored by our

Knights of Columbus who have supported him since he began his seminary studies. What a blessing he will be to us and to the Diocese! The homilist that weekend is **Fr. George Griener, S.J.** so we are sure to be inspired and challenged by his homily. And finally, the members of our Community Garden Ministry are holding a Plant Sale to benefit the needs of the garden. This will once again be a great weekend.

Liturgical Ministries Morning of Enrichment

Please make sure to join us for a wonderful morning of enrichment, inspiration, and education on Saturday, May 2nd, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. This is our Second Morning of Enrichment for all in Liturgical Ministry: Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Greeters, Sacristans, Altar Servers, Adult Acolytes, Altar Guild members, singers, Choir Directors, Organists, instrumentalists, Deacons and Presiders. Our keynote speaker is once again **Fr. John Kasper** and the breakout sessions will be led by myself and **Fr. Ron Schmit**. Come and be renewed in your various ministries. See the flyer in today's bulletin.

There is no charge to attend and the morning is being offered to all in the Delta Deanery, from Bay Point to Byron.

The Easter Environment

How blessed our parish is to have such a creative and artistic Art & Environment Committee that creates and maintains environments that draw us more deeply into the spirit of the season we are currently celebrating. That is especially true of Easter. The beautiful new Altar Painting of the Marys on their way to the

tomb where they encounter the Risen Jesus was done by **Sherry Morris**. The artistic placement of the panels of festive material at the Icons, the candles, the trees, blooming plants, Easter Lilies, and cut floral arrangements serve to bring us a sense of being in the Garden of the Resurrection.

On behalf of all of us, our thanks and gratitude to: **Rich Confetti, Dorothy O'Connor, Theresa Nelms, Don Benson, Clem Bushman, Lesley Eubanks, Peter Degl'Innocenti, Denise Moss, Tom & Stevie Catchings, Norma and Pablo Villegas, Gail Burgarino, Paul Burgarino, Joanna Burgarino, Lilia Suarez, Harlan Young, and Carlynn Costello.**

Thank You

...to **Jocelyn and Jacqueline Villalobos, and Steve Rojek**, who came early last Saturday morning before Sung Morning Prayer to clean, dust, polish, sweep and prepare the sanctuary for the weekend.

...to **Robert Goncalves, Patricia Britton, Gino Ramos, and Geri Abaya** for cleaning and maintaining the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall last weekend, especially given the large crowds present for Holy Saturday and Easter.

...to our Knights of Columbus who did such an outstanding job of providing traffic control and parking lot security for both Palm Sunday and Easter: **Bob Plurkowski, Bobby Zabroski, Steve Rojek, Jose Perez, Monty Paniagua, Armando Vasquez, Mark Webster, Clem Bushman, Don Benson, Bob Goncalves, Jack Goncalves, Jose Palomino, Ron France, and Bill Barbanica.**

A Personal Easter Thank You

Each day, I give thanks to God for the privilege and blessing of being your shepherd. These past ten years have gone by so quickly and with each year, my love for you has grown. I want to thank you for all the ways you have shown your love and support for me, especially this Easter: the cards, notes, letters, home-baked breads, cookies, candy, cupcakes, Leche Flan, bottles of wine, the expressions of gratitude for my presence in your lives. In so many ways, you have been Christ for me – I see Him in you, I hear His voice in your speech, I see Him in so many kind, thoughtful, generous actions, and especially in your expressions of love. Thank you for all the ways in which you have made this Holy Week, Triduum, and Easter so special, for your faith, your love for this incredible parish, all of which is a reflection of your love for God. You have inspired and deepened my faith and helped me to love ministry even more than I ever thought possible. For all of this, and for so much more, thank you.