

For The Bulletin Of
April 12, 2020



EASTER DAY

THE FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION

From Father Robert

That first Easter Morning must have been a whirlwind of confusion, perplexity, and ultimately joy. According to John's gospel, Mary of Magdala was the first to find the tomb empty. Her reaction was not belief in the resurrection, but something more human – that somebody had stolen the body! She immediately informs Peter and another disciple of her suspicion. That other disciple is thought to be the Beloved Disciple, “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” He is nameless throughout the Gospel of John, and there is no mention of this person in any other gospel. Yet he is portrayed as the model of discipleship, as we see that “he saw and believed,” something not even Peter did upon witnessing the empty tomb.

Interestingly, the gospel passage ends on the note that these disciples did not yet understand the Scriptures that He had to rise from the dead. After all this time with Jesus, and even finding the tomb empty, they still did not understand. Yet, the Beloved disciple, at least, believed. Such a

story gives hope to us who did not travel with Jesus or experience His historical ministry. If we have questions or experience a lack of understanding, we may be assured that the earliest disciples, the followers of Jesus Himself, felt the same way even after the resurrection.

Much as it may sound surprising to us, the resurrection of Jesus seemed to be a surprise to His disciples. Mary of Magdala's first reaction is logical: the body has been stolen. Peter and the Beloved Disciple see for themselves that their tomb is empty, but only one believes. They did not understand the Scripture. We are reminded that we live by faith and we seek understanding. Easter Morning gives us our “north star,” the guiding light by which we live our lives. The death of Jesus was not His end. He was raised in a wholly unexpected way to new life. His destiny is ours; His new life will be shared by us who seek to follow Him. On this Easter Morning, may we be open to the unexpected ways that God may work in our lives.

Here are three questions for further reflection and meditation:

- In the psalm we hear, “The stone which the builder's rejected has become the corner stone.” God exalts the lowly and humbles the exalted. How do you live this in your own life?
- Today's gospel acclamation calls us to “feast with joy in the Lord.” How does your family keep the Easter feast?
- We are told that upon entering the tomb, the Beloved Disciple “saw and believed.” What has been your own journey to belief?



The sign of Jesus' resurrection is the stone rolled back from the tomb. Mary Magdalene, assuming it was opened by thieves intent upon stealing Jesus' body, alerts the other disciples. In the Synoptic gospels, the women who arrive on Easter Morning worried that this stone will keep them from the One they love. But this is not the case.

Nothing can keep us from God, not even death itself. It is not the force of human hands that removes the stone. It is the love of God. On Easter Morning we come face-to-face with the empty tomb and know the proclamation of St. Paul: "...neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus Our Lord."



This Easter Morning is unlike any Easter before it...we will miss being together which is one of the most important parts of Easter Worship: being together in the Risen Lord...the Easter Greeting and your thunderous response...the glorious music and the sound of our magnificent pipe organ accompanying our singing and the Easter anthems of The Parish Choir...the majesty of Easter Liturgy and the environment...the church filled to capacity, the enthusiasm, the energy, the dynamism...the reception of Holy Communion...the blessing with Easter Water...the presence of the Neophytes in their white garments, radiant and fragrant from Sacred Chrism, the sign of the Risen Lord in them...but even though we are not together physically, it is the Spirit of the Risen One Who unites us through the miracle of the Internet and makes us appreciate even more the wondrous gift of what it means to be parish, to be church. We pray for the healing touch of the Risen Lord for all those affected by the corona virus: those who are ill and dying...those who have died...family members, friends, and loved ones who are grieving...the stress, fear, anxiety, but the HOPE and TRUST that Jesus has conquered this as well and that it will not separate us from His Love. Even in this challenging time, let that HOPE and TRUST sustain us and

make it possible for us rejoice in the Risen Lord today and always. He has not abandoned us but is with us now in a way even more wonderful than we could ever have imagined.

On behalf of “Moses,” the members of the Pastoral Staff, the members of the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council, we join in wishing you a very special blessed Easter as you “shelter-in-place” and may you all feel His loving embrace of you not just today, but forever.

Father Robert



April 5, 2020

***Notice During the Covid-19
Outbreak***

In solidarity, we at the Interfaith Peace Project stand together in these times of heart break and upset. Some of you may have lost friends or family members. Some of you may have lost your job and your income; some may be working overtime to help with the crisis. Some of you may be home and alone and some may be trying to figure out a new way to live. Please let us know how we can help. If you would like a phone

appointment with any of us, give us a call. You may call or email Tom at:

***Tom Bonacci
peace@thomaspbonacci.net
925-787- 9279***

A New World?

April 5, 2020

Dear Friends,

The Buddha as a little boy had a heart-wrenching experience. As he observed the plowing of the fields for a spring planting, he saw a worm struggling for life as the blade cut through its body. The Buddha, or Siddhartha as he was known before his Enlightenment, was frozen somewhere between grief and broken-heartedness. His life would never be the same. He had experienced the cruelty and sorrow that lurk in the shadows of every creature's life. This experience was a major factor in what would become his life of compassion.

The current Covid-19 experience is no less than heart-breaking. Only a few days ago, I wondered how we are going to recover from the economic setbacks that threaten our livelihoods and well-being. Now I wonder who will become sick and who will die. Like the blade of the plow cutting through the soil, our lives are torn apart with anxiety and dread for ourselves and others. It is precisely in moments like these that we need to rise up and be compassionate with ourselves and one another.

We are invited to become aware of the priorities in our lives. Not a day goes by when the sad news of sickness and death invites me to truly examine myself to discover what matters most. I have come to see it is not as a matter of "what" but "who" matters to me. Of course, I think of family and friends. But I have come to feel in my heart a concern for everyone. As I light my evening candle of hope at seven o'clock, I shed a tear for each and every person who lives in the place I call home - Earth.

I can now identify with all those who suffer fear and anxiety for I myself feel fear and anxiety. A wonderful counselor once invited me not to run away from my feelings or even try to change them. She invited me to enter into them. I have come to realize my anxiety and fear is no less than my love for others. Now I embrace my fear and cherish my anxiety for they remind me to love others.

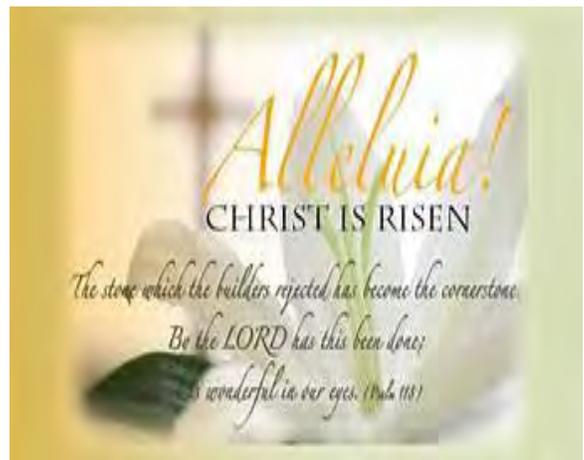
Compassion for others is the meaning of life. Jesus warned us not to lose heart. It is where our treasure is found. There in the depth of our hearts we discover what it means to be a human person. I may not have much time on Earth but I pray that every second I have will be an expression of the care and concern that lives in my heart.

Finally, I am invited to remember the courageous people around me who dedicate themselves to the service of others. Where does such generosity come from? It comes from the depth of the human heart. As

I see dedicated children, women, and men sacrificing themselves for other suffering people, their example invites me to give of myself in whatever way I can.

A new World is being born. We will never be the same. Not a day goes by now when we are not invited to love one another.

Peacefully,
Tom, C.P. with the Board of Directors
The Interfaith Peace Project



PRAYER FOR A PANDEMIC

May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips
remember those who have no safe place to
go.

May we who are losing our margin money
in the tumult of the economic market
remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at
home remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country, let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically
wrap our arms around each other, let us yet
find ways to be the loving embrace of God
to one another and our neighbors.

We ask this through Christ, our Great
Physician and Healer.

Amen



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I received a beautiful email from one of my
parishioners at St. Paschal Baylon, Oakland,
Dr. Betsy Norris, a teacher at St. Joseph's
High School, Alameda. She is a writer and
poet and she shared with me the following
poem she composed under the inspiration of
the Holy Spirit for this unique time in our
history and in our lives and how it has
affected our inability to worship during Holy
Week. Thank you, Betsy for this beautiful
and inspired gift.

**LENT IN THE TIME OF
CORONAVIRUS**

*It's different this year. In the sacred silence
of an empty church*

I walk the Stations alone.

*My virtual house arrest Pales against the
arrest and torture*

*Of the accused King of the Jews Crowned
with thorns*

Our corona a pandemic

A collective condemnation gone viral.

*His Cross a crushing burden He falls three
times*

*As we have fallen over our failures To keep
the Faith*

To connect with human hearts

To protect the Earth.

*He is touched by the presence of His
Mother, Veronica, the Daughters of
Jerusalem*

*As we are by Doctors, nurses, health
workers, scientists*

First responders and caregivers.

Simon of Cyrene helps to carry the Cross

As do those who feed the hungry

Help the old, neighbors, strangers

Comfort the frightened and lonely.

He is nailed to the Cross

*The upright beam linking divinity to
humanity*

*The transverse beam stretched out to all of
us*

*“Jesus, remember me When You come into
Your kingdom”*

*Many die every day
Quarantined and alone
Death, the great equalizer.
It's different this year.
The journey to Calvary
solitary Palm Sunday
No procession or waving palms
Holy Thursday
No Bread or Wine
Good Friday
No personal veneration of the Cross
Lent challenges us to look inward
In solitude and prayer
To rethink our priorities
But the Resurrection is nigh!
May we emerge from our cocoons
Changed and renewed!*

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Principles for a pandemic

Apr 8, 2020

by [Joan Chittister](#)



A woman wearing a protective mask due to the coronavirus pandemic prays inside the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on Palm Sunday, April 5 in Turin, Italy. (CNS/Reuters/Massimo Pinca)

"Rules are not necessarily sacred," Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, "principles are."

One thing is clear: "Rules" are not getting us out of the largest pandemic in modern history.

We're washing our hands and wearing our masks and staying indoors and counting the number of people in every group, but the numbers keep going up regardless.

At the same time, principles, if any, may be necessary but nobody talks about them much —despite the fact that it's principles that guide our behavior or help us to evaluate what's going on around us. Principles are the motivating force upon which everything we do is based.

Worse, if we never ask ourselves what our principles really are, how can we ever survive, let alone resurrect the foundations of a moral, an effective society, tumbled by circumstances, felled by the deaths of the past. How can we ever change what must be changed?

That kind of spiritual ignorance is no small factor in the shrinking of the soul of a country.

Surely we must insist on asking ourselves the question: what's operating in us — and what isn't — that could have/would have stopped this thing weeks ago? If the rules aren't working, what principles, if any, are driving us?

Those questions plague me daily now. And here's why.

The Benedictine Order, my community's tradition, is the oldest religious order in the church. Which means that in its over 1,500 years of existence, it has lived through every plague, epidemic and pandemic in the Western world: smallpox, the Black Death, cholera, yellow fever, the Spanish flu and HIV/AIDS to name a few. And there's not a single word in that ancient document that alludes to what history told us we needed to do when the next epidemic might rear its hoary head. No rules about it at all.

In fact, come to think about it, there are no real "rules" about much of anything in the "Rule of Benedict."

But, at the same time, there are principles aplenty.



A man wearing a protective mask prays at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Managua, Nicaragua, March 22 amid the coronavirus pandemic. (CNS/Reuters/Oswaldo Rivas)

Having read the Rule every day for over 65 years, they have been drip, drip, dripping into my soul to the point that I am beginning to see the power of principles over proscriptions very clearly.

The question is what kind of basic truths — principles — must drive us if we are to endure and survive the kind of despair that threatens a national moment like this one? Here we are at the touchdown point of a tornado called a pandemic. Everything about life before this has been wiped away. Worse, we have not a hint of what our world will look like in the future. Unless we define the principles we need to preserve, not only

to get us through this moment but to prepare for all the great moments in times to come, this will all have been for nothing.

After 1,500 years, four principles of life stand in striking contrast to what a casual observer might consider the pillars of an ancient Benedictinism that for all this time has apparently remained as fresh and alive as tomorrow. Why? Because they stretch the soul to become more than it is, whatever period of history we're in.

First, the Rule says in Chapter 52, "Let the oratory be what it is called." No one can get through life — or a pandemic — unscathed who has not daily returned to the sacred space of the heart where the energy flows from the God of life to our own.

Becoming a spiritual person is what raises us above the angst of life. We can lose anything, let anything go, begin again after whatever tornado shreds us if we only learn to live with one part of the human heart daily invested in the presence of the divine. In that sacred space within, we seek the strength it takes to respond rightly to the pressure of such pain. We are not pleading for magic from a vending machine God to save us from its inconvenience.

Second, Chapter 35 gives one clear direction: Benedict writes: "The members should serve one another. ... Let those who are not strong have help so that they may serve without distress and let everyone receive help as the size of the community or local conditions warrant."

We take on the challenges of the community — the masks and distancing and overtime work that's needed — as if they were our personal responsibility alone. We check on those who are frail, who need to know they're not alone, who are seeking services. We allow no one to be out of contact. We volunteer where we're needed.



A man in Oakland, California, waits for a bus April 6 during the coronavirus pandemic. (CNS/Reuters/Shannon Stapleton)

Third, in Chapter 50, Benedict does what most people would least expect. After writing chapters on community prayer and the choral recitation of the Divine Office, he suddenly writes, "Members who work so far away ... are to perform the Opus Dei — prayer — where they are."

There are some things so important to the life of the human community that we may not use holiness as an excuse not to

do them. What the world needs us to do is what will make us holy at the same time. We do not hide behind prayer as an excuse to care only for ourselves. It is precisely all the hours we spend in prayer that makes it possible for us not to be there sometimes.

Finally, *The Dialogues of St. Gregory the Great*, a hagiographical biography of Benedict, teaches us our fourth principle in a story. Gregory writes about the man who in hard times came to the monastery to beg for oil. Oil was the staple of the time: It gave light and provided heat in bad weather, made food preparation possible and could even provide the beggar an opportunity to earn a little money if he could sell some of it.

The business manager of the monastery, however, a careful businessman, knew how important oil was to the monastery itself, and — since anything could happen — refused the beggar the oil.

When Benedict, the visionary leader, heard what he had done, he told the business manager to bring the vial of oil and summoned the entire community. When all had assembled, he took the oil from the business manager, handed it to another monk and told him to throw it out the window. Point made, he directed a third monk to bring the vial in again and present it to the beggar.

Then, when Benedict knelt down to pray, the half-full vial of oil began to overflow.

The principles of the holy life are obvious: it begins with a sterling spirituality, an abounding love of

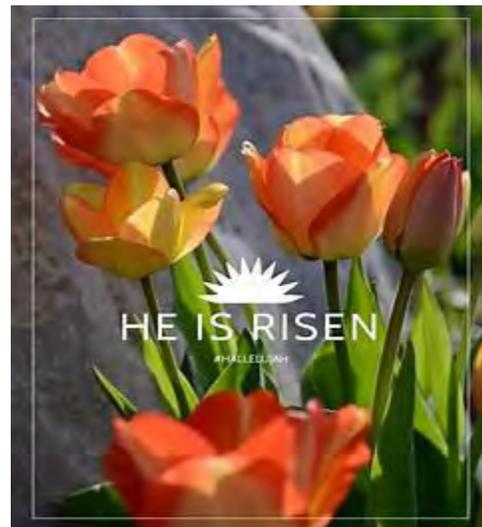
community and an incessant sense of personal responsibility that makes the undoable, doable always.

Until finally, it depends on following leadership that glows with goodness and vision. It is the leadership that shows us all how to be more empathic, more aware of the needs of others, more present to the demands of it all. It is the living vision of moral leadership that sends us back into the wind as long as it rages. It brings us to a greatness no circumstances can exhaust, no storm can conquer.

Indeed, it's not the "rules" that count; it's principles that are the driving force. Principles are the noble base. Principles are the foundation of character of our souls and the quality of our lives.

From where I stand, it's not about the rules. It's about the heart. Then we can go on, and go on, and go on. For over 1,500 years. Same rule, same principles, same gratuitous generosity of life.

[Joan Chittister is a Benedictine sister of Erie, Pennsylvania.]





April 8, 2020

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**A FEW WOMEN
IN A VAST ARMY OF
CARE AND SELF-
GIVING**

Someone said, "Save a nurse, stay home!" We thought it a good idea to dedicate this page to the nurses, doctors, researchers, and healthcare professionals who are on the front lines of caring for Covid-19 patients. They do so at the risk to their own health and lives.

It happens in every generation that men and women of uncommon dedication and courage rise to the occasion offering hope and comfort to those who suffer. As you ponder these short biographies, we hope you are encouraged by the spirit of these women and the beauty of their souls. Let each of us, in our own way, rise to the occasion and be a source of encouragement and strength for other suffering people.

Amy Pacholk



Amy Pacholk is a registered nurse at Stony Brook University Hospital. She is an experienced

Advanced Practice Nurse currently working with Covid-19 patients at one of the busiest hospitals in New York. Amy stated that working in the Critical Care unit with Covid-19 patients is like working in a war zone. Amy moved to a hotel in order to not bring the disease home to her family. She is just one of our heroes keeping us safe.

(photo from linkedin account)

Deborah Birx



Deborah Birx is currently a member of the Presidential Covid-19 Virus Task Force and has been quite visible in recent days. She is a medical expert in the field of HIV/AIDS. She is an Ambassador at Large and U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator. She oversees the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief as well as all the United States Government's involvement with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

For over thirty years, Deborah has focused on HIV/AIDS immunology, vaccine research and global health. She has been the Director of the Division of Global HIV/AIDS at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Deborah was a Colonel in the United States Army and served at the Department of Defense as Director of the U.S. Military HIV Research Program at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. (photo from linkedin account)

Nita Patel



Nita Patel, director of vaccine development at Novavax, has led work in both virology and antibody development. She is a research scientist with extensive experience in Drug and Vaccine development for Infectious Disease.

Nita currently leads an all female team to produce a vaccine against the COVID-19 virus. Novavax is in phase two of development with two to three phases of human trials to follow. (photo from linkedin account)

Deborah Fuller



Deborah Fuller is a vaccinologist and professor of microbiology at the University of Washington School of

Medicine. She leads one of the labs pursuing a vaccine against coronavirus, COVID-19.

Deborah has been working in the field since 1991 and specializes in novel DNA and RNA vaccines. DNA and RNA vaccines have never been approved for wide use. However, Deborah believes that this type of vaccine is the best chance for developing a safe vaccine quickly. One RNA vaccine for corona virus, by Moderna, is currently in clinical human trial. (photo from linkedin account)

Seema Verma



Seema Verma, head of Medicare and Medicaid, is an important part of the presidential task force on COVID-19. As head of Medicare and Medicaid, Seema helps to shape how health care is provided in the United States by having the authority to waive or modify rules and granting emergency flexibility so that health care providers can respond quickly.

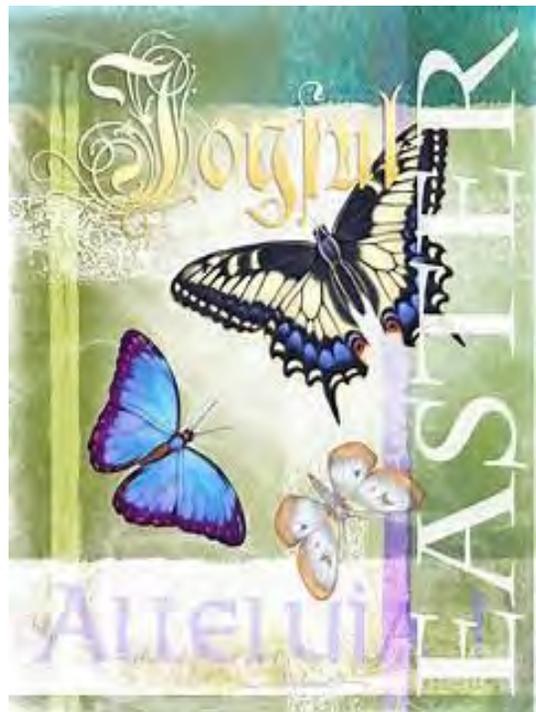
Seema received her bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland in 1993 and her Master of Public Health from Johns Hopkins School of Public

Health in 1996. (photo from linkedin account)

GRATITUDE

Thank you to the gentle spirit of those who give of themselves
Thank you to the women who ceaselessly birth life into our wounds
Gratitude to you who assure us in uncertain times
Gratitude to you who nurse the afflicted with medicine of love

Gratitude to you who are often afflicted with rejection
Gratitude to you who often feel failed when we hurt
Thank you kind and gentle women who are always there for us
Thank you dedicated women of the heart whose hearts are often broken.



Justice Corner by Carolyn Krantz, Pastoral Associate

“A light rises in the dark for the upright,” says Psalm 112. Well, we are still waiting for health to return and the resumption of normalcy. It still seems pretty dark, but the just shall never be moved. We stand firm in faith. “I have risen and am still with you,” says Psalm 139. How do we balance the pandemic and economic uncertainty with the Easter message?

Always in Christianity, the faithful have been challenged to balance the good with the bad, the light with the darkness. Christ taught us to accept suffering and go through it into joy—a very difficult lesson. “Death and life have contended in that combat stupendous.” We can only do what Christ does and say, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” Do not let your suffering go to waste. Unite it to Christ's for the suffering world. Whether we succumb to this sickness, or make it through, we must spend our days “Thinking of what is above” where our lives are “hidden with Christ in God.”

Remember what Fr. Richard Rohr says, “Pain that is not transformed is transmitted.” We must dedicate part of our day to holding this suffering before the Lord and let Him enter into the fear and confusion. Let the Lord transform this space. We do not want to transmit fearfulness and worry to our families and friends. Rather we want to uphold a position of faith in every day. In Christ we each have the power to maintain a positive faith-filled approach to this situation.

Let us focus on the positive messages that are coming through the media. People are buying groceries for others. People are volunteering at hospitals. People are running errands for the elderly. They are donating blood. They are showing signs of faith every day, showing generosity on every level. They are putting aside the old yeast of malice and spitefulness and responding as the risen people that we are. We are clearing out the old yeast and learning how to become people of “sincerity and truth.” We are learning how to hold on to the resurrected Christ in times of our crucifixion.

There are two concerns with this pandemic event: health and economy. Both bring on feelings of fear and uncertainty. Will I get sick? Will I be able to maintain our bank balance? Do not avoid these feelings, but embrace them in trust. When this is over, we will know how to live with less, we will treasure our relationships more. We are an alleluia people and that is our song. So if you are nurturing someone that is sick, say “Alleluia”. If you are struggling to pay the mortgage, say “Alleluia.” If you are frustrated by the inconvenience of it all, hold these feelings before God. Only in prayer can we bring our unruly nature into the Kingdom of the resurrected Christ.

It is difficult to recognize the risen Lord amid the virus outbreak. We weep with Mary in the garden, missing the presence of the Lord. But then Jesus calls her by name, “Mary”. She responds with respect and admiration, “Rabbi.” The Lord, our teacher, is with us, even if we cannot recognize Him. Listen for His teaching. He calls us each by name. But we cannot cling to Him. We must get up and go to those around us to announce, He is risen and goes before us.

Parish Perspective— By Peter DeglInnocenti...Pastoral Associate

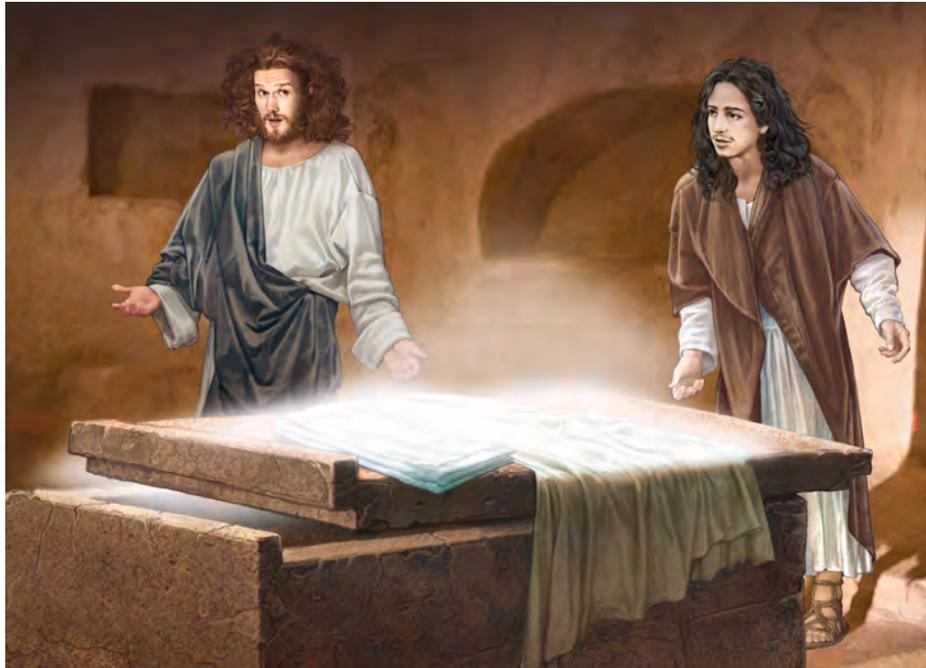
The Thing That Lives

“It is the resurrection of the Lord”. We hear that statement at Eastertime quite often. It is an event that happened a long time ago, yet we still refer to it in the present tense, “is”. Why? Because Jesus is, and he lives on in the present now and forever more. We remember when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Jesus confided in Martha when he said, “I am the resurrection”. Jesus is so many things it may be impossible to define all his parameters, but he is a human man, the Son of God, the truth, the life, and the resurrection. He is a “thing” being human and he is also an “event” being the resurrection. Resurrection is a living event. We are children of the resurrection. We belong to a living event and I believe that is what St. Paul talks so much about when he mentions “living the resurrected life”. When we act in accordance with the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ, we demonstrate to the world an event brought about by the living Christ. We are the resurrection in the moment of our activity. When we live (act) and believe in Jesus, that is when we are most alive. Easter Sunday is our day too. We are the body of Christ and we are the resurrection today!

This Sunday we may not be gathering at a certain building on Contra Loma Blvd. but we are still a Church and we still do the things the Holy Spirit prompts us to do. We are a resurrection people. We have all been doing the small simple things we can do from our homes and places of shelter during this pandemic. My wife has put her sewing talents to work making masks for people in the neighborhood. I continue to write this column and to pray for an end to this misery and the dearth that it causes. We can all watch the live feed of Sunday Masses online. One thing I do certainly miss is the music. I miss being there to help create the swelling volume of gorgeous sound rising up to heaven. There is comfort in knowing that eventually things will return in large part to the way they were.

There will be a resurrection of the Church as much as there was a real resurrection of Jesus on that first day of the week. The parking lot will fill again. The people will return to their exact same seat in their exact same pew. Church support and second collections will try us again especially when some of us have been out of work for so long. Music will ring in our ears and new homilies will stir in our hearts. There will be resurrection again. There will be life again.

EASTER SUNDAY



Living Our Salvation

Lord of heaven and earth,
the Resurrection of your Son is a promise
that you will not abandon us to sin
and death
but will transform all creation
until it has at last become your
perfect kingdom.
Continue the work you have begun.
Refashion us now, today.

Liberate us from whatever is luring us
into the grave.

Share your life-giving power with us
so that we will rejoice in your love,
live in hope of our future together,
act with the unwavering courage of Jesus,
and marvel at all you accomplish.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 12, 2020

New Beginnings



Today's Readings: Acts 10:34a, 37–43; Psalm 118:1–2, 16–17, 22–23; Colossians 3:1–4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6b–8; John 20:1–9 or Matthew 28:1–10. Today we rejoice, feast, and spend time with family and friends. Easter Sunday is a day of beginnings. In John's Gospel, two disciples rush to the empty tomb, where it dawns on them that something tremendous has happened. In Matthew's Gospel account, the women are given only a few moments with the Risen Christ before he sends them to evangelize.

The months following Jesus' Resurrection are busy ones. In the passage from the Acts of the Apostles that we hear today, Peter has entered the house of a Gentile. Filled with the Holy Spirit, this Apostle delivers a powerful proc-

lamation of the Gospel, yet before he finishes, the Holy Spirit comes upon everyone else in the room too. Throughout the Easter season we will hear how the Spirit of the Risen Lord leads and empowers Jesus' followers to inspire more and more people to believe in the Resurrection and to make a new beginning of their lives.

It is now our turn. It is our season of new beginnings. God shared the Spirit with us so that we will "seek what is above" and allow the Spirit to further transform us into just and holy people. God shared the Spirit with us so that we will enter people's houses, enter people's lives, and help them to begin anew.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 13 The Empty Tomb

No one disputes that the tomb was empty. The question is how it became empty. By spreading a false report, some of the religious authorities hope to prevent people from believing that Jesus rose from the dead. When Peter speaks to the crowd, however, he doesn't use the empty tomb as proof of Jesus' Resurrection, but refers instead to the Scriptures and his encounter with the Risen Jesus. How would you explain the true meaning of the empty tomb? *Today's Readings: Acts 2:14, 22–33; Psalm 16:1–2a and 5, 7–8, 9–10, 11; Matthew 28:8–15.*

Tuesday, April 14 The Spirit of the Risen Lord

Mary Magdalene must let go of Jesus as she knew him in order to encounter him in a new way. Having been crucified and raised, Jesus is no longer confined to time and space, but is now present among and even within his followers through the gift of the Holy Spirit. All who accept this gift become brothers and sisters of the Risen Lord and sons and daughters of God the Father. Send a note of welcome to anyone in your community who was baptized at the Easter Vigil. *Today's Readings: Acts 2:36–41; Psalm 33:4–5, 18–19, 20 and 22; John 20:11–18.*

Wednesday, April 15 Amazement

The two disciples leaving Jerusalem are amazed by the women's report of the empty tomb. They grow increasingly astonished as the Risen Christ opens the Word and breaks bread with them—and then vanishes. Also astonished are the people in the temple who see the disabled man jumping about and praising God. These stories invite us to rejoice at the enduring power of Christ in the world. *Today's Readings: Acts 3:1–10; Psalm 105:1–2, 3–4, 6–7, 8–9; Luke 24:13–35.*

Thursday, April 16 Witnesses

Jesus' followers witnessed his mighty deeds. Two of his disciples witnessed the Risen Lord as they headed to Emmaus. Still more disciples heard the Risen Christ speak words of peace to them and prepare them to minister in his name. A man in the temple area experienced the Risen Lord acting through Peter. Peter urged the people who witnessed that healing to acknowledge the saving power of the Risen Lord. Thank someone who has been an especially strong Christian witness for you. *Today's Readings: Acts 3:11–26; Psalm 8:2ab and 5, 6–7, 8–9; Luke 24:35–48.*

Friday, April 17 Bolder than Ever

Peter seems as impulsive as ever as he dives into the water to swim to the Risen Lord. This man of action then rushes to drag over the net laden with fish when Jesus asks for more food. The Holy Spirit strengthens this natural tendency of Jesus' lead disciple. After a night in the custody of religious authorities who wish to silence him, Peter goes on to speak as boldly as ever. Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you do something brave today. *Today's Readings: Acts 4:1–12; Psalm 118:1–2 and 4, 22–24, 25–27a; John 21:1–14.*

Saturday, April 18 Dealing with Disbelief

The extended ending of Mark's Gospel account is reassuring to those who struggle to believe in the Risen Lord. Even Jesus' closest followers did not initially believe in the Resurrection. Jesus had to appear to them and empower them with his Spirit. Once that happened, it became "impossible" for them not to share the story of Christ. Read and reflect on a Gospel passage for this week. Imagine you are one of those early disciples. Ask God to strengthen your faith. *Today's Readings: Acts 4:13–21; Psalm 118:1 and 14–15ab, 16–18, 19–21; Mark 16:9–15.*

