



Easter Reflections

St. Pius V Community
St. Louis
April 19-25, 2020

Poor Thomas, Doubting Thomas! After research, I found there were several instances in the Gospels where some of Jesus's followers were incredulous. It was and still is hard to recognize and accept Jesus's resurrection.

For example: Mary Magdalene thought Jesus was the gardener. Ten apostles thought they were seeing a ghost. The two disciples going to Emmaus could not recognize Jesus until he broke the bread with them.

Because Thomas missed out on seeing Jesus appear in the locked room on Easter evening, he had a difficult time accepting that Jesus had arisen. Thomas needed the same proof Jesus gave the others. When Jesus came to the locked room the next week, he told Thomas to examine his wounds. I can see Thomas snatching his hands behind his back as he joyfully exclaimed "My Lord and my God!"

People still sometimes have the same difficulty. They want a sign or bargain with God. Jesus softly asks "Have you come to believe because I show you?" Peter's gives our answer: "Although you have not seen him, you love him; even though you do not see him now, yet you believe in him."

The results of recognizing and accepting the resurrected Jesus are devotion to the teachings of the Church, the Eucharist, prayer, and charity. Let us receive the risen Jesus "with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God," rejoicing with an INDESCRIBABLE AND GLORIOUS JOY!

Second Monday Easter

Mary Mertzluft

Some of us choose to live in confinement, one similar to the fearful apostles praying together in the upper room. After seeing Jesus crucified, they wondered what would happen with the call they committed their lives to and feared for their safety. They did not have the assurance of the Spirit's coming as we realize today.

These weeks have given us a better understanding of what it means to be confined and fearful as we shelter in place. None of us suspected our lives would change so drastically, that fear and anxiety would be a cloud following us through this desert. Yet amid our own fears, we remember our brothers and sisters who while confined, live with daily fear and violence, little shelter, food or medicine.

As a resurrection people, it is appropriate that we wait for the Holy Spirit with HOPE for Jesus grounds us and we depend on his presence as we shelter in him and He in us.

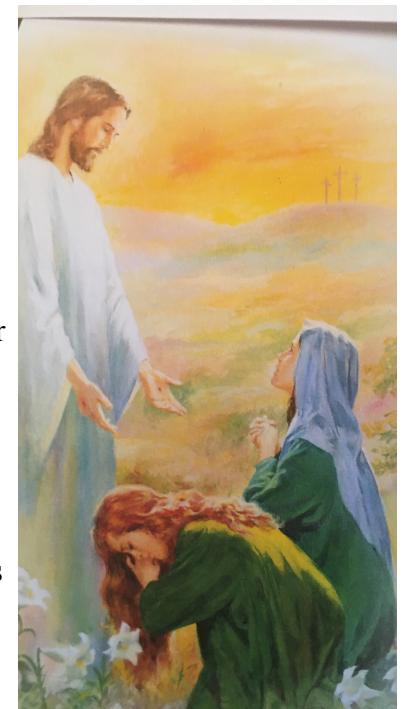


Second Tuesday of Easter

Pat Hinton

During this time, more than ever, not only our nation, but the world is joining efforts to develop a vaccine for COVID-19.

Thousands of people are risking their lives to save others, and many are unsure of their livelihoods. What the early community of believers and we have in common is the need to trust in God. They had to let go of the fear that they would not have enough essential things for themselves. We, too, want to be sure we have enough during this time of crisis, but what are we unwilling to share for the good of all?



Our culture is one of control. Jesus is asking us to surrender-to remember that He is Divine Providence. We need to choose life-the life that Jesus offers us-and let go of what we so tightly hold on to. Through the power given us by the Spirit, this becomes possible!

Nicodemus lived in fear. He came to Jesus at night. What darkness am I enveloped in-worry, failure, despair? God is asking us not to be afraid-that He will be the Light that will brighten our lives.

One of my favorite contemporary Christian artists is Lauren Daigle. Her song, 'Look up, Child' reminds us to focus on what is above. The first stanza goes:

'Where are You now
When darkness seems to win?
Where are You now
When the world is crumbling?
Oh I, I hear You say-
Look up, child'

And so I ask you to go out in your yard for a few minutes and—
LOOK UP, CHILD!

Blessings, Hope, & Celebration

The Collect for Mass today includes, “As we recall year by year the mysteries by which, through the restoration of its original dignity, human nature has received the hope of rising again, we earnestly beseech your mercy, Lord, that what we celebrate in faith we may possess in unending love.” Today we celebrate Administrative Professionals. As part of the backbone of our parishes, most often we find an admin person working with the Pastor to pull all the pieces and parts of parish business into one bucket of treasure that keeps us going. We are able to share Jesus with one another much more freely when we have a strong and healthy parish staff. Let us celebrate and share hope with those working in the background.

Today is also designated as Earth Day. The Gospel tells us, “*God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish, but might have eternal life.*” John 3:16. The world is not just us as people. We heard the story of Creation at the Easter Vigil, where a dark covered abyss became light, water, sky, vegetation, moon, sun, living creatures, even creeping things and then people. As humans, we were gifted with all of Creation. These days, as we learn to sustain life in this pandemic environment, let us be good stewards of our home. Pope Francis gifted us with his encyclical letter, [Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home](#), where he calls on all of us to “dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet”. Let us go forth sharing blessings and hope to all of Creation.



**Second
Wednesday of
Easter**
Deb Torres



**Second
Thursday
of Easter**
*Harrison
Sand*

Today’s readings seem to have a central theme of identifying the difference between that which is worldly and that which comes from God. I have to ask myself, who have I been obeying this week?

It is natural to feel fear and anxiety at this time. I would guess that everyone in our community is feeling some apprehension and concern. This is a rational response to the current crisis that our world is going through. The question I need to ask myself is am I letting my anxiety lead me to God. Am I trying to build my trust in God or am I trying to hide myself from the realities of life?

If I am not using my anxiety as a way to bring myself closer to God, then am I really obeying God or am I obeying something entirely different? I think the psalm for today can help me see where my actions lead: “The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; and those who are crushed in spirit he saves. Many are the troubles of the just man, but out of them all the LORD delivers him.”

By allowing my anxiety to lead to God, I will be obeying God, and as a result I may be comforted. If what I am doing to relax or comfort myself is only leading to greater anxiety or harsher feelings of mistrust, perhaps I need to try something else.

I challenge you today to look at how you are comforting your anxiety. Is your comfort coming from worldly sources and increasing your anxiety or is it coming from God and leading to being “delivered”?

For me, I’ll be replacing my daily romp through our news and social media with a prayerful walk.

Second Friday of Easter

Cathy Lubbering

We are familiar with this gospel from John, of Jesus miraculously feeding the 5000 men, plus the additional women and children, from five barley loaves and two fish. As I read and reread today's gospel, I was struck by Jesus' question testing Philip, "Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?". What an apt question for today, as many of us wonder the same during our experience of sheltering in place and possibly being furloughed from work. Well into our second month of this, many are becoming more anxious, worried and fearful of how they'll provide for their family's needs, especially if they have been unable to work.

While we are tested and see those we love being sorely tested, we are called to trust and believe that just as thousands were fed from a few loaves and fishes, we too can be fed in these trying times. I think of Father Paul's invitations to spend time with the gospel, and encourage all of us to this practice now. I am nourished as I sit with John's words reminding us of the bounty of God's love for us. Allow Jesus' words to wash over you and nourish your soul, knowing Jesus fully understands our anxieties and comes to feed, comfort and reassure us.



Saturday Second week of Easter

James Skinner

In today's reading of the last verses of the First Epistle of Peter, we read that:

"The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ Jesus will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little."

It should be a great source of comfort to us to know that God will confirm and strengthen us. And this epistle acknowledges that there will be suffering, a fact we clearly see when we look around us! It should be hoped that we can also restore, confirm, and strengthen one another, to the extent that we can support each other here in our lives now. Seen from this point of view, it reminds me of the commandment of Jesus in the Gospel of John, that we should love each other as God loves us: "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." In this shocking time of world-wide disease and unemployment, many of us are of course thinking about what we can do to support our neighbors, friends and fellow human beings.

Today April 25 is the feast of St. Mark the evangelist, and it is charming to see Peter thank Mark, who is like a son to him in his support, at the end of this reading.