

The Good News of Easter

By Cynthia Trainque

“Jesus Christ is risen today — Alleluia! Our triumphant holy day — Alleluia!” Such is the message we sing today — this day we call Easter. What makes this day “triumphant”? Two reasons. The first is this: Our sins are now wiped clean and we have the promise of Heaven if we live our lives in accordance to God’s word and in cooperation with His Grace. It’s not just that Jesus died for our sins that we find forgiveness... there were many “messianic figures” long before Jesus and in the time of Jesus. The difference is that he rose again from the dead while the others did not. St. Paul says “... if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins”... and then “we are the most pitiable people of all” (1 Cor. 15:17, 19). Easter is of such great importance that it is now at the head of our week! That is, Sunday is the Lord’s Day — EVERY Sunday is a memorial of the Lord’s death and resurrection! But it is not just a day to remember but for us to live it and to experience him when we receive Him — Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Eucharist at Mass. Food of all foods.

Jesus’ Resurrected Body

The second reason we find Easter to be “triumphant” is that Jesus shows us what will happen to us at *our* resurrection. Each week at Mass when we recite the Creed, we say the words “I believe in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come”. What does this mean? A lot! The Gospel writers and St. Paul have much to say about this. Let’s look at what they tell us.

When Jesus rose from the dead, he was unrecognizable at first. Mary Magdalene thought he might be the gardener: “Mary stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken my Lord, and I don’t know where they laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” She thought it was the gardener and said to him, “Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni,” which means Teacher (Jn 20:11-16).

In Mark, we see that the two men who walked along the road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus because he was “in another form” (Mk 16:12). However, in both situations Jesus was clearly recognized by his voice. Notice how the two asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way?” (Lk 24:32).

As far as his physical body is concerned the apostles presumed him to be “a ghost” (Lk 24:37) because he appeared to them in the upper room “when the doors were locked” (Jn 21:19). With his resurrected body, Jesus could not be limited to time and space — but rather he could appear anywhere at will.

We see in his glorified body that he could be touched physically as he said to Thomas in the upper room: “Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side...” (Jn 20:27). Jesus showed that he could eat as well. We see two times when Jesus placed food into his mouth to eat. The first is in the upper room: “Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have.” And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, “Have you anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them” (Lk 24:39-43). The second was at the Sea of Tiberius: (See Jn 21:1-12). Notice in this passage, too, that the apostles did not recognize Jesus.

Our Own Resurrected Bodies

Here is where things get interesting. We, too, shall have resurrected and glorified bodies — just like Jesus! No doubt you want to know, how is this even possible? Now we turn a lot to St. Paul. In his first letter to the church at Corinth in Greece, Paul assures us, “eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him (1 Cor. 2:9). But how do we know that this will come to pass for each of us? Listen to St. John (who wrote the Book of Revelation with its wonderful visions) — Jesus is “the firstborn of the dead” (Rev. 1:4). Note the word “firstborn” St. Paul calls Jesus “the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20). Firstborn, first fruits... First Jesus and then each and every one of us shall rise.

I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body

Here’s another question you may have... In what manner shall all of this come to pass? The church in the great city of Corinth asked the same thing of St. Paul in a letter: “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come back?” (1 Cor. 15: 35).

Here is his explanation in his return letter to them, written around the year A.D. 56. (It is the first letter that he wrote to them and so it bears the name of the First Letter to the Corinthians). We all know that we start out in life with a human body — like a “kernel of wheat” as St. Paul calls it (verse 37). He adds that “what you sow is not brought to life unless it dies” (v. 36) and he makes it clear, “so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown corruptible; it is raised incorruptible” (v. 42) which means that once our body dies and the soul goes to God for immediate judgment (what the Church calls the ‘particular judgment’) it (the soul) later reunites with our resurrected glorified bodies in order to go on living “in Christ”. It is a process we must go through — “just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life” (v. 42).

So... we go through all of this just to be able to sit upon a cloud in heaven and to sing Alleluia for all eternity? “By no means!” (Rm. 11:1). We know that in this life there is sin, sickness, suffering, death, corruption, etc. All of these are considered as enemies of ours. For anyone born before 1970, we were brought up with the Baltimore Catechism in order to learn the Faith. Question number six asks this: “Why did God make you?” The answer that all Catholics had to learn was this: “God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next”.

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OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

April 21, 2019

Easter Sunday

Dear Parishioners,

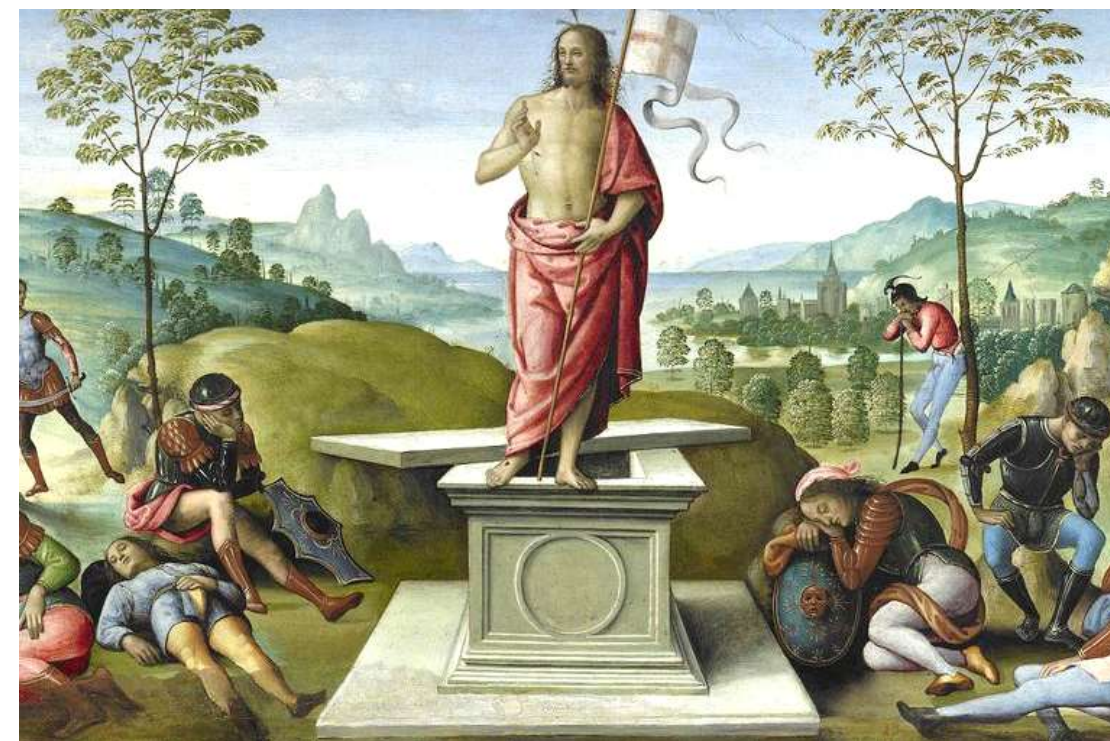
A blessed, happy and holy Easter to all of you! The resurrection of the Lord is the greatest testimony of our faith. We have a God who loves us so much that he sent his Son to die for us so that we may be together with Him in heaven. The Resurrection is proof that physical death is not the end of human existence. The rising of Christ shows that we too will have victory over death in this life.

Dear friends, with great joy we can celebrate the fact that it is not just us who celebrate these beautiful truths. We now have among us .. new Catholics who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and have been baptized and confirmed at the Easter Vigil. Congratulations to all of them! Many of the children of these families are also being baptized this Easter morning. Let us rejoice and extend a warm welcome to all of them as they are now members of our faith community.

My sincere thanks and appreciation to the sponsors and the RCIA team who put in many hours to prepare the newly baptized. The work of evangelization is never done. I urge you all to contribute to this work through prayer and active participation in ministry. There are many who have not heard of the good news of the love of God. Our prayers and good works serve as an inspiration to draw others to Christ.

May our Blessed Mother who knows best how to draw us all into a closer relationship with her son, be our mentor and guide. On behalf of all the confreres of the Redemptorist community, please accept my sincere thanks for your prayers and good wishes for Easter.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, CSSR



This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad. - Psalm 118

NEWS & NOTICES

Weekly Collection: Sunday Mass Offering April 13 & 14: \$5,509.64. Share Lent: \$1,390. Offering for the Needy: \$1,368.00. Thank you for your faith-filled generosity.

No Thursday Evening Devotions on April 25: There will be no regular evening Mass and devotions on Thursday April 25 because of the Grade 7 Confirmation Mass. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Good Friday Collection For Holy Land: Each year on Good Friday, our Archdiocese is called to support Christians in the Holy Land. Many Christians in the Holy Land depend on the collection for their lives. As a Pontifical collection requested by Pope Francis, the annual Good Friday Collection helps to maintain not only the Holy Places above all, but also the pastoral, welfare, educational and social works that the Church carries out to the benefit of the Christian brothers and sisters and the local population.

Request for New or Gently Used Items: The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is getting ready for their Annual Yard Sale on Saturday, May 25th and needs your treasures! Proceeds will go towards helping to fund our outreach efforts. Donate new or gently used items that are still in good condition (toys, household items, clothes, craft supplies, tools, etc., but no large furniture items, car seats, cribs or electronics please). Donations can be dropped off at Holy Family Parish on Wednesdays after the 9 a.m. Mass until noon or on Sundays after the 10:30 a.m. Mass. Pick-up can also be arranged. Food donations are also welcome on the day of the garage sale. Please contact Sherri Marcotte 604-710-4269.

Windows into Heaven: An Introductory Guide to Icons: On Friday April 26, the Ministries and Outreach Office will launch a bi-monthly series of talks, lectures and experiences that will be held on Friday nights at the John Paul II Pastoral Centre. Our first event features Steve Knight, the President of the Epiphany Sacred Arts Guild and an iconographer who has written over 125 icons. He studied iconography at the Iconographic Institute in Mt. Angel, Oregon, and under Don Gianluca Busi of Bologna, Italy. Register for FREE at rcav.org/event/into-the-deep-friday-night-faith-series/

Spring Institute 2019: One-day courses for ministry training, faith formation and general interest open to all on Saturday April 27, 10am to 4pm at Holy Cross Secondary in Surrey. For complete course listing information visit rcav.org/oc-spring.

Mass of Remembrance: Join us for our monthly Mass of Remembrance on Sunday, April 28 as we pray for our family members that have passed away this month. Masses are at 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. in our Evangelist Chapel, at Gardens of Gethsemani in South Surrey.

Madonna House Morning of Recollection: Angelyn Dee will speak on Near the Cross is an Empty Tomb: An Easter Reflection on God's Mercy seen through the Cross and Resurrection. Please join us for a talk, fellowship, and mid-day prayer. Saturday, April 27th from 9:30 am to 12 noon at St. John the Apostle Parish Hall, 5457 Trafalgar St, Vancouver.

Quo Vadis - Men's Discernment Events: Open to single Catholic men ages 18+ who want to answer the question: What is God calling me to do with my life? Join us for a Discernment Evening with Fr. Juan Lucca who will be talking about celibacy Wednesday, April 24, 7-9 p.m. at St. Patrick's Parish, Vancouver. Please register at least one week in advance by contacting the Vocations Office at vocations@rcav.org or call 604-443-3254

PLEASE PRAY

Please pray for the peaceful repose of the soul of Vincent Gok, a longtime parishioner and usher who passed away on Saturday April 13 in Vernon.

PSALM 23

*The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right path for his name's sake.*

Stewardship Reflection

"He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him." (Acts 10:38)

On this Easter Sunday, open your hearts to receive God's love, mercy and forgiveness. God is love and we are made in His image and likeness. Let our lives reflect His light to others. Pray for guidance on how to live your life and give thanks for all that He has given you.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

APRIL

Talk on L'Arche



CWL will have a special guest speaker from L'Arche at their next meeting on Wednesday April 24 at 7:30pm in the Madonna Room. Anyone who is interested in the work of L'Arche is welcome to attend. L'Arche creates communities of friendship and belonging so that people with and without intellectual disabilities may live, work, learn and grow together. For more info, please email: MKnowling@Outlook.com.

International Festival



Our International festival gatherings leading up to Pentecost Sunday are back! We invite parishioners to share the food and aspects of their culture with short music or dance presentations after the 11am Mass. If you are participating, please contact Lara. Her email is olphchurchvolunteers@gmail.com.

Sunday May 19: Asia

Sunday May 26: Europe

Sunday June 2: The Americas

Sunday June 9: Pentecost Sunday BBQ



Archbishop Miller's Easter Message

"Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, he is risen" (Lk 24:5). These angelic words dumbfounded the bewildered women who went to Jesus' tomb on that first Easter morning. His body was no longer there! With awe and joy, the Church of God in Vancouver proclaims to the world: "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" (Lk 24:34).

At Easter we rejoice because Christ did not remain in the tomb. His body did not experience corruption. Life triumphed over the power of death. Through the power of the Resurrection, our Redeemer is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. The Risen Lord is the same yesterday, today and forever (cf. Heb 13:8).

Borrowing from the language of the theory of evolution, Pope Benedict has observed that Christ's Resurrection is the greatest "mutation," the most crucial leap into a totally new dimension that there has ever taken place in the long history of the development of life. On that first Easter morning Christ leaped into a totally new life, bursting the bonds of death which could not hold him prisoner.

The new age has begun. Starting from Christ, our world – fallen and fragile though it is – is already being transformed into the new creation. The arrogance of evil has been vanquished by the power of love.

The Resurrection is a cosmic event, which links heaven and earth together. Jesus is not a man from the past. He is the Living One, who still walks before us and calls us to follow him.

The Risen Lord reaches out across time and space to reach us. He comes to us through Baptism. Baptism means precisely this, that we are not dealing with an event of the past, but with a qualitative leap in world history that encompasses us. It seizes hold of us and draws me into the promise of eternal life. This is what it means for us to be baptized into Christ.

Easter, then, is a feast of exuberance, of exaltation and of enormous joy. In the Archdiocese of Vancouver, together with the whole Church throughout the world, we rejoice that the darkness of our night has been transformed into the brightness of a new day. The Risen Christ, and he alone, is the hope of a better world. "This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice in it and be glad" (Ps 116:24).

**+ J. Michael Miller, CSB
Archbishop of Vancouver**

EASTER TRIDUUM CELEBRATIONS

Happy Easter

The Lord is truly risen, alleluia. To him be glory and power for all the ages of eternity, alleluia, alleluia.

Good Friday: Noon Prayers and Liturgy of the Passion

The Good Friday liturgy led by Fr Bill was a beautiful, solemn celebration with the Gospel of the Passion and veneration of the Cross. Earlier in the day, parishioners had gathered for noon prayer followed by soup and bread served by the Knights of Columbus and their little helpers.



Holy Thursday: The Last Supper

On Holy Thursday we celebrated the Mass of the Last Supper led by Fr Joseph. Just as Jesus washed the feet of his disciples as an example of serving others, the priest also washed the feet of those who came forward. The Holy Oils were also presented at this Mass.

