

Rev. Mark J. Vyverman
Easter Sunday: April 1, 2018

It doesn't happen very often that Easter Sunday falls on April 1st, or what we refer to as April Fool's Day. In fact, the last time it occurred was in 1956, 62 years ago. The Romans nor the people of Israel celebrated this day or even knew about it. It was much too early in history. In fact, if you look it up, there are several different versions given of when April Fool's Day began. No matter which version you believe, it looks like this day has only been celebrated for the past several hundred years.

Yet it somehow seems appropriate that we are celebrating this Easter Sunday on April Fool's day. Let's take a moment and think about it. All of us, at one time or another, have been on the receiving end of an April Fool's joke or prank. Sometimes it's pretty obvious that it's April Fool's Day and that someone is trying to fool us or pull a prank on us. At other times, it might take us a while to realize what has happened and then we do look like the fool.

On that first Easter Sunday, the news of what happened probably did seem like it was the first April Fool's Day. Jesus, a man who was crucified, whom everyone saw die on the cross and buried in the tomb, with guards posted outside his tomb, is now risen from the dead. How did that happen? Everyone was in disbelief: the soldiers, the Romans, the Jewish people, even the disciples. The news didn't even seem possible that such a thing could happen. Yet reports that He had risen and the tomb was empty. But then Jesus appeared to His disciples, even though they were hiding and locked away. They saw with their own eyes, that what had happened to Lazarus now was also true for Jesus. The hearts of the disciples started to fill with joy and wonder.

This is why that Easter Sunday seemed like the first April Fool's Day. The Fools didn't believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. They made up stories about what the disciples had done, such as they had come in the night and stole his body. But those who were filled with faith, believed. They were **not** fooled by what had happened and saw it with their own eyes. Jesus had triumphed over the power of death!

It may seem strange to say, but this April Fool's day may just be the reminder we need to celebrate Easter. We need to make sure that the world is not fooling us to lessen our belief in the Resurrection or to live in the ways of Christ. There have been too many times that the world has fooled us. Take the time today to let this Easter Sunday breathe new life into your faith. Remember all your loved ones this day, especially those who have gone before us in faith. For their faith can continue to strength our faith as well and in doing so, we entrust them into the hands of the Lord.

No one ever wants to look like the fool or feel foolish. Instead, put all your hope and trust in the Lord. Jesus has shown the world that there is hope and a promise for the future, giving the world a bright future. See that He has risen from the grave, Alleluia! Alleluia!