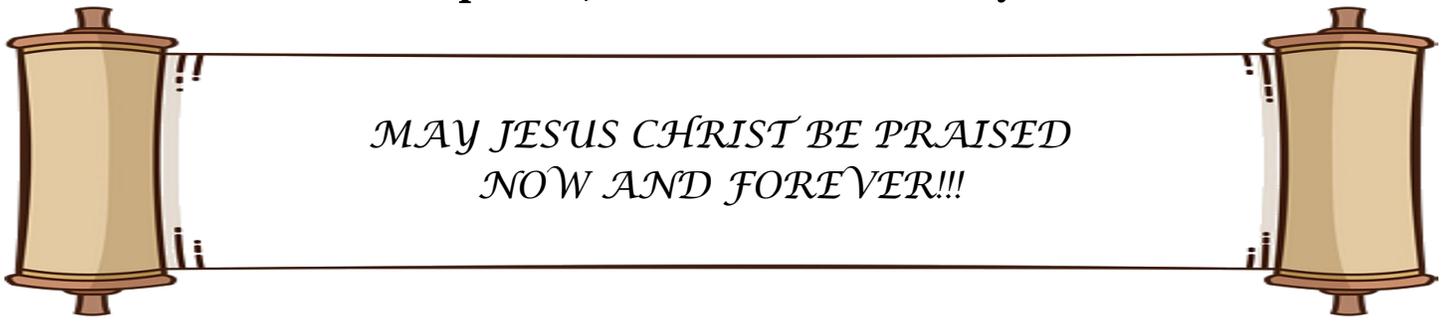


April 21, 2019 – Easter Sunday



MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED
NOW AND FOREVER!!!

Easter Greetings

We no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for Jesus is alive and has become the Lord of life. From the waters of death the Father has raised Jesus and renewed His gift of life within us. May God increase in our minds and in our hearts the risen life we now share with Christ, and may He help us to grow together as His people.

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

Prayer: Our Deepest Longing III

I am excited to share with you some insights that I have gained about prayer from Fr. Ronald Rolheiser's book: *Prayer Our Deepest Longing*. Quotes from his book will be in bold and my reflections will be in the normal font.

We unconsciously nurse the idea that we can pray only when we are not distracted, not angry, not emotionally or sexually preoccupied. We think God is like a parent who wants to see us only on our best behavior. So, we go into God's presence only when we have nothing to hide, are joy-filled, and feel we can give proper attention to God in a reverent and loving way. Because we don't understand what prayer is, we treat God as an authority figure or a visiting dignitary—as someone to whom we don't tell the real truth. We don't tell God what is really going on in our lives. We tell God what we think God wants to hear.

Prayer



This quote hit me very hard. It made me realize that there have been times in my life when I have only prayed when I thought I "looked good" before God and there were times that I avoided prayer when I thought I "did not look my best." Being reminded of God's love for me, inspired me also to appreciate God all the more and has helped me to stop trying to earn God's love and instead I simply try to remind myself each day of God's love. This is possibly the reason why the Mass starts off with the Penitential Rite which reminds us of how God loves us despite the fact that we are all sinners.

Every thought or feeling is a valid entry into prayer.

Another big lesson I have learned in life that I wish I could get others to understand is that "thoughts and feelings" are neutral. They are not good or bad. It is what we do with them that matters. Becoming angry at my brother for example is not a sin but wishing him harm is. I could take that anger instead of sinning and turn it into a moment of grace where I choose to forgive my brother instead of wishing him harm.

In learning to manage my depression, I practice something that psychologists call mindfulness. This is the idea that it is healthy to be aware of one's emotions so we can address them correctly. For example, when I find myself being angry, I don't become mad at myself for being angry, but instead I sit down and pray and ask God to help me understand why I am angry and what are the healthy ways that I can come use that anger for good.

We live in a world of instant and constant communication, of mobile phone and email, of iPods that contain who libraries of music, of televisions packages that contain hundreds of channels, of malls and stores that are open

twenty-four hours a day, of restaurants and clubs that stay open all night of sounds that never die and lights that never go out. We can be amused, distracted, and catered to at any time.

While that has made our lives wonderfully efficient, it has also conspired against depth. The danger, as one commentary puts it, is that we are all developing permanent attention deficit disorder. We are attentive to so many things, that ultimately, we aren't attentive to anything, particularly to what is deepest inside of us.

Silence is important for the spiritual life.

At the end of the day, we expect that God is disappointed with us and we will greet us with a frown. The tragedy and sadness here is that avoid God when we are most in need of love and acceptance. Because we think God is disappointed in us, especially at those times when we are disappointed in ourselves, we fail to meet the one person, the one love, and the one energy—God—that actually understands us, accepts us, delights in us, and is eager to smile at us.

I always look forward to seeing my mother at the end of the day because I knew that she would always love me no matter how my school day was. I feared my dad because I could never seem to do anything right for him. Sadly, there are times in which I think of God being more like dad even though intellectually I know God always loves me. Every morning I must wake up and remind myself of how God loves me. Another important reason to pray each morning.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Sunday

God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, 'I love you.' - Billy Graham

Monday

The most astounding fact about this spectacle of vigilance over the dead was that the enemies of Christ expected the Resurrection, but His friends did not. It was the believers who were the skeptics; it was the unbelievers who were credulous. His followers needed and demanded proofs before they would be convinced. – Fulton Sheen

Tuesday

Jesus's resurrection is the beginning of God's new project not to snatch people away from earth to heaven but to colonize earth with the life of heaven. That, after all, is what the Lord's Prayer is about. - N. T. Wright

Wednesday

The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of. Our attention would have been on God. - C. S. Lewis

Thursday

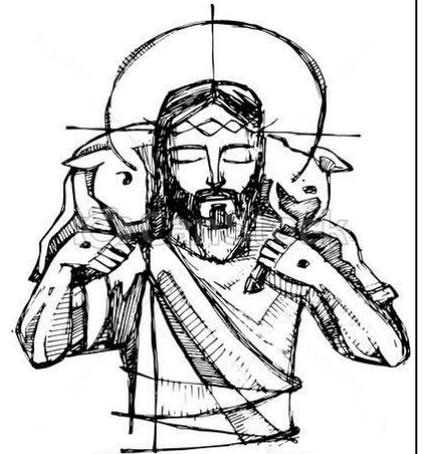
The great gift of Easter is hope - Christian hope which makes us have that confidence in God, in his ultimate triumph, and in his goodness and love, which nothing can shake. - Basil Hume

Friday

Christ the Lord is risen. Our joy that hath no end. - John of Damascus

Saturday

And he departed from our sight that we might return to our hearts and find him there. For he left us, and behold, he is here. - Saint Augustine





BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

April 21 2019//Easter Sunday The Resurrection of the Lord//Lectionary: 42 //Gospel JN 20:1-9

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So, she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

Spiritual Reflection: GK Chesterton "On the third day the friends of Christ coming at daybreak to the place found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways, they realized the new wonder; but even they hardly realized that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a semblance of the gardener God walked again in the garden, in the cool not of the evening but of the dawn."

Spiritual Questions:

1. Why does the resurrection take place in the Garden and the first sin happened in a garden?
2. How does the resurrection fix the wound of original sin?
3. How is God a gardener?
4. What do you make of the fact that God had to search for humans in Eden after sin and now they are searching for God after salvation?
5. What do you think of God and humans walking together again in a garden?



PRAYER FOR RESPECT OF LIFE

Heavenly Father, the beauty and dignity of human life was the crowning of your creation. You further ennobled that life when your Son became one with us in his incarnation. Help us to realize the sacredness of human life and to respect it from the moment of conception until the last moment at death. Give us courage to speak with truth and love and with conviction in defense of life. Help us to extend the gentle hand of mercy and forgiveness to those who do not reverence your gift of life. To all, grant pardon for the times we have failed to be grateful for your precious gift of life or to respect it in others. We ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

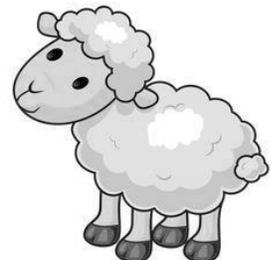


St. Monica Society

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

THE PRAYER, SPIRITUAL ARMOR OF PRAYER.

Heavenly Father, we ask bless those who have fallen away and us who have remained of You today for Your truth, As a belt tight around our waists. We put on the zeal, to announce Your good news of peace, As shoes for our feet. We put on Your righteousness, O Christ, as our breastplate. And the hope of salvation, As a helmet for our head. Father we take up faith, as a shield which is able to put out, All the fiery darts of the enemy. And the sword of the Spirit, which is Your Word, O Lord. Father may the love, with which You have loved Jesus, be in us and may Jesus be in us. We ask You for the grace, Of a servant heart. Amen.



CATHOLIC PRAYER:

EASTER PROCLAMATION(EXSULTET)

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!
Exult, all creation around God's throne!
Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!
Sound the trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor,
radiant in the brightness of your King!
Christ has conquered! Glory fills you!
Darkness vanishes forever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory!
The risen Savior shines upon you!
Let this place resound with joy,
echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

[My dearest friends, standing with me in this holy light,
join me in asking God for mercy,
that he may give his unworthy minister
grace to sing his Easter praises.]

[V. The Lord be with you.
R. And also with you.]

V. Lift up your hearts.
R. We lift them up to the Lord.

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
R. It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly right
that with full hearts and minds and voices
we should praise the unseen God, the all-powerful Father,
and his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

For Christ has ransomed us with his blood,
and paid for us the price of Adam's sin
to our eternal Father!

This is our Passover feast,
when Christ, the true Lamb, is slain,
whose blood consecrates the homes of all believers.

This is the night when first you saved our fathers:
you freed the people of Israel from their slavery
and led them dry-shod through the sea.

This is the night when the pillar of fire
destroyed the darkness of sin!

This is the night when Christians everywhere,

washed clean of sin
and freed from all defilement,
are restored to grace and grow together in holiness.

This is the night when Jesus Christ
broke the chains of death
and rose triumphant from the grave.

What good would life have been to us,
had Christ not come as our Redeemer?

Father, how wonderful your care for us!
How boundless your merciful love!
To ransom a slave
you gave away your Son.

O happy fault, O necessary sin of Adam,
which gained for us so great a Redeemer!

Most blessed of all nights, chosen by God
to see Christ rising from the dead!

Of this night scripture says:
"The night will be as clear as day:
it will become my light, my joy."

The power of this holy night
dispels all evil, washes guilt away,
restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy;
it casts out hatred, brings us peace, and humbles earthly pride.

Night truly blessed when heaven is wedded to earth
and man is reconciled with God!

Therefore, heavenly Father, in the joy of this night,
receive our evening sacrifice of praise,
your Church's solemn offering.

Accept this Easter candle,
a flame divided but undimmed,
a pillar of fire that glows to the honor of God.

Let it mingle with the lights of heaven
and continue bravely burning
to dispel the darkness of this night!

May the morning Star which never sets find this flame still burn
Christ, that Morning Star, who came back from the dead,
and shed his peaceful light on all mankind,
your Son who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

 Humor

