

Pastor's Weekly Message

Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018

The Joy of the Resurrection

Alleluia, Christ is risen! This is real, it is not April Fool even though today is the First of April. "Exult, let them exult, the host of heaven!" We heard those words at the Easter Vigil when the priest sang *Exsultet*, the Easter Proclamation to set the mood for the season of Easter. We rejoice because our Lord Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! Yes, we can shout 'alleluia', sing the Gloria and ring the bells again because by his resurrection, he has conquered sin and death. Darkness has vanished because He who is the light of the world has triumphed over the grave.

Easter Vigil is the most important night and Easter Sunday is the most important day of the church. Last night, we had the long but beautiful liturgies of the Light, the Word, the Sacraments of Initiation and the Eucharist. From the Pascal Candle, the faithful received light for their own candles. The lighted Pascal candle contains a twofold symbolism. It reminds us of the pillar of fire that helped the Israelites to see in the darkness of the night when they fled the land of Egypt, and it symbolizes Christ, the light of the world. In the readings, we recalled God's love for us and his plans for our salvation. It was a night we rededicated ourselves to God who loved us so much when we renewed our baptismal commitments. We also joyfully welcomed new members into the church through the sacraments of initiation. For the children and adults that completed their initiation in the faith, last night was a night they will never forget. It is the beginning of their new life in Jesus and the church. We pray that the joy that filled their hearts will always radiate in them as they follow Jesus in their daily living.

Today is a day of joy as the psalmist today says "this is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad" (Psalm 118:24). The second reading from first Corinthians invites us to 'celebrate the feast.' Because Jesus rose from the dead, life cannot be the same again. Creation has been recreated or renewed; our mortal life is now assured of immortality in Christ. The joy that fills our hearts and minds today must be sustained. Many Christians are in church on Easter Sunday to celebrate their victory in Christ recognizing that after the cross comes the crown. In our daily pains and struggles, we must always be focused on Jesus who is our help and our salvation. Every Sunday is a mini-Easter so let us make out time for God every Sunday to come into his house to worship, pray, fellowship and celebrate with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Catechism teaches that the day of the Resurrection is the beginning of the new creation. "Jesus rose from the dead 'on the first day of the week' (John 20:1). Because it is the 'first day,' the day of Christ's Resurrection recalls the first creation. Because it is the 'eighth day' following the Sabbath, (Mk 16:1) it symbolizes the new creation ushered in by Christ's Resurrection. For Christians it has become the first of all days, the first of all feasts, the Lord's Day - Sunday: We all gather on the day of the sun, for it is the first day [after the Jewish Sabbath, but also the first day] when God, separating matter from darkness, made the world; on this same day Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead" (St. Justin, Apology). (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2174)

The resurrection of Jesus truly has a deeper meaning for us more than unbelievers. May Christ's resurrection lead us to victory and be a source of courage for us all year long. Happy Easter to you all!!

Divine Mercy Sunday: Next Sunday is Divine Mercy Sunday. To celebrate this special day, we will have a special celebration at 3PM with the Exposition of the Eucharist and the Divine Mercy prayer. I invite you to join us for this celebration. St. Faustina longs to pray before the Blessed Sacrament as she says in her Diary #1591:

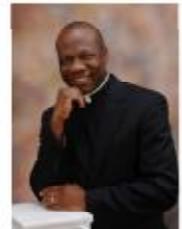
My heart is drawn there where my God is hidden,
Where He dwells with us day and night,
Clothed in the White Host;
He governs the whole world, He communes with souls.
My heart is drawn there where my God is hiding
Where His love is immolated.
But my heart senses that the living water is here;
It is my living God, though a veil hides Him.

School's Spring Carnival: Join our school in her Spring Carnival fun and fundraising event on Saturday April 7th from 11AM to 8PM on our parish grounds. This is going to be fun for the kids and adults as well. There will be carnival rides for the kids, food and games, silent auction and raffle drawings for all. There will be crawfish bowls for sale and a Sabine Connection Zydeco band will be live on stage from 3PM to 5PM. Come with your family and friends to have fun and raise funds to support our Catholic school. I thank the school principal, Joshua Raab, and the development director, Eddie Green and all the volunteers and planners for their hard work.

A new counseling ministry in our parish: We welcome Laura Aguirre, MA, LPC-Intern, a licensed professional counselor intern to our parish counseling ministry. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Sam Houston State University. Laura is part of the Rejoice Counseling Apostolate who has partnered with our parish to provide onsite professional counseling services. You can learn more and schedule an appointment by calling 844-295-3167 or at www.myparishcounseling.com/st-mm.

MSP Annual Retreat/Meeting: Fr. Tony and I will be away this week Monday through Friday for the annual retreat and meeting of the Missionary Society of St. Paul priests working in the United States. We expect all 50 MSP priests working in the United States to gather in prayer and review our apostolate at the Holy Name Retreat Center in Houston. Keep us in your prayers. We invite you to join us for the closing Mass at St. Nicholas Church in Houston on Friday April 6th at 6:30pm followed by a reception in the parish hall.

Fr. Felix Osasona (pastor@st-mm.com)



Word of Life

May the Risen Christ grant us joy as we follow Him,
embracing God's gift of life; *We pray to the Lord:*