

FAITH NOTES

April 2018



The Resurrection of Jesus Where the Gospels Really Begin

All four Gospels contain accounts of Jesus' resurrection. Although you'll find them in the final chapters of the Gospels, they really constitute the beginning of the Good News proclaimed throughout. In and through their experiences of Jesus' death and resurrection, the first followers were finally able to answer Jesus' question: "Who do you say that I am?" And so, with hearts aflame they began an intensive missionary campaign, traveling the known world armed with stories, proclamations and invitations to become disciples of Jesus, the Christ. Decades later the Gospels were written, within and for the communities formed along the way. Their purpose was the same: "...these [things] are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31)

Mark's community realized that we only truly recognize Jesus Christ after we travel his journey to the cross. And so in Mark's Gospel, authentic discipleship inescapably involves self-sacrificing service...

Matthew's community recognized Jesus Christ as the ultimate teacher of Torah because he himself personified it. And so in Matthew's Gospel, true disciples *do* what Jesus commands: love and forgive *as Jesus loved and forgave...*

Luke's community recognized Jesus Christ as the One who brings God's blessings of peace, healing, reconciliation, forgiveness, and wholeness to the world. And so in Luke's Gospel, sincere disciples promote peace, unity and the well-being of all, especially the marginalized...

John's community found in Jesus Christ the One who comes from above and brings the eternal life of the world above: the love between the Father and the Son in the Spirit to those who believe. And so in John's Gospel, authentic discipleship is judged by how well believers love one another...

"Who do you say that I am?" As the Gospel portraits of Jesus make clear, *your* answer to Jesus' question will determine if and how you follow him.

St. Matthew's Church



GENERATIONS OF FAITH
ENRICHING, EDUCATING, ENGAGING ALL AGES

Pray It Forward



Lectio Divina

Praying with the Ears of Your Heart

- Choose a passage from Scripture.** Suggestion: the day's Gospel reading.
- Offer up a short prayer.** Suggestion: as you inhale, say "Jesus" and as you exhale tell Jesus what you need in one word, (i.e. peace, forgiveness, love, etc.) or just say "Jesus" again.
- Read the passage once.** Let the words wash over you.
- Read the passage again.** Be on the lookout for a word or phrase that jumps out at you. When it does, acknowledge it as a gift from God.
- Read the passage a third time.** Talk to God. Let God talk to you. Have a real conversation. What might God be trying to tell, ask, invite you to...?
- Conclude with a short prayer, or simply rest in God's embrace.**

"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..." —John 20:1

"Mary Magdalene and the holy women who came to finish anointing the body of Jesus, which had been buried in haste because the Sabbath began on the evening of Good Friday, were the first to encounter the Risen One. Thus the women were the first messengers of Christ's Resurrection for the apostles themselves."

—Catechism of the Catholic Church, #641

“If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.” -1 Corinthians 15:14

“Everything depends upon this! First of all, God is revealed as really being the way that Jesus had preached. God is *Abba*, on the side of the one rejected, able to give a future to someone who has none. Henceforth, we can trust God to have the last word on our behalf, as indeed God had the first, and that word is *life*. In addition, the resurrection vindicates Jesus’ message, ministry, even his person. He had been found guilty by human judges, who did away with him as a danger to religious tradition and the stability of the state. God now overturns the judgment of those judges and says there is another, divine judgment to be made about this crucified criminal, namely, that he is the Son of God. Finally, a future of hope opens up for every human being and for the whole of creation. If God has so raised Jesus, then that same future becomes a real possibility and hope for the rest of us.”

–Elizabeth Johnson, *Consider Jesus*

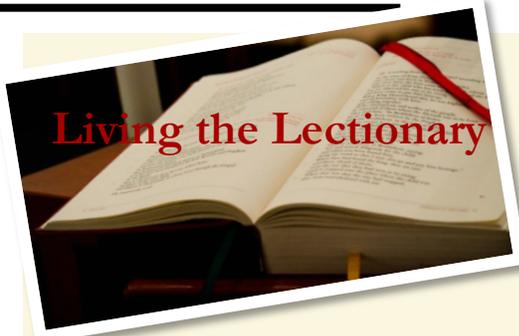
“It is the mystery of the thrown-away stone, that ends up being the cornerstone of our existence. Christ has risen from the dead. In this throwaway culture, where that which is not useful takes the path of the use-and-throw, where that which is not useful is discarded, that stone that was discarded is the fountain of life.”

–Pope Francis

What’s Your Easter IQ?

- Easter lasts for ___ days.
 - Our Church’s celebration of Jesus’ Resurrection begins on Easter Sunday and lasts until _____.
- True or False: Easter is the longest season in the liturgical year.
- True or False: During Easter, all of the lectionary readings come from the New Testament, with emphasis on Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of John.
- On every Sunday of Easter, the Second Reading comes from the First Letter of _____.
- The liturgical colors of Easter are _____ and _____.
- Why do we call the Resurrection “Easter”?

Answers: 1)50; 2)Pentecost; 3)False – but it comes in second place to Ordinary Time; 4)True; 5)John; 6)white and gold; 7) Trick question! The short answer is that nobody really knows for sure, but you can find out more about the history of this word by checking out the article, “Why Do We Call the Resurrection Easter?” on uscatholic.org (You’ll find it under “Your Faith”)



April 1, 2018

Solemnity of Easter Sunday

Gospel: John 20:1-9

Adults: Why do I believe that I will live with Christ for all eternity?

Kids: Who has helped me believe that I will live with Jesus forever?

April 8, 2018

2nd Sunday of Easter

Gospel: John 20:19-31

Adults: What can I do to inspire my family to resemble the first Christians?

Kids: What can my family and I do to help others who are in need?

April 15, 2018

3rd Sunday of Easter

Gospel: John 12:20-33

Adults: What questions about Jesus still arise?

Kids: What question would I ask someone about Jesus appearing to the Disciples?

April 22, 2018

4th Sunday of Easter

Gospel: John 10:11-18

Adults: Who is shepherding me? Whom have I shepherded?

Kids: Who has been like a shepherd to me by his or her example?

April 29, 2018

5th Sunday of Easter

Gospel: John 15:1-8

Adults: When has God pruned me so that I could grow and give life?

Kids: When have I felt good because I did something to help someone?

From RCL Benzinger

<http://rclbiblectionary.com>