

# EASTER 2015

## *Sixth Sunday of Easter - May 10*

*Easter in us! The fifty days of Easter are meant to be a time when the local church (that is you and I) unpack the implications of the resurrection of Jesus among us.*

An Easter Newsletter

Number 6, May 10, 2015

### *Sixth Sunday readings:*

*AA 8, 5-8, 14-17*

*1 Pet 3, 15-18*

*Jn. 14, 15-21*

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the Word of God

They sent Peter and John to them



The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit



Laid hands on them

And they received the Holy Spirit



## WORK YOUR EASTER

Every once in a while you will hear the old timers say: 'too soon old and too late smart!'

This is a lament that it takes us a long time in life to discover the true meaning of why we are here. Only as we live through the good times and the very hard times, can we hope to mature and become a peace-filled senior. The opposite of maturity would be to reach old age and be bitter, self-centered and best avoided by others!

**We live in a society that wants everything to be instant. We are served news as it is breaking – but do we have any depth in the instant newscasts? The resurrection takes much time and effort. Only if the Church (that is, you) wrestles with the resurrection will it have any depth in our lives.**

We often hear in the late sixties and mid-seventies people speak like this. 'I would never want to go through that horrible struggle with my cancer and the terrible effects of the chemotherapy.' There is a pause in the conversation. 'But I

would never be the person I am if I had not gone through the long struggle of my own cancer.'

Life needs a lot of reflection and working through the doubts and confusion.

The Church has structured things well. These fifty days of Easter are the season for us to work through the implications that Jesus is alive and risen among us! The resurrection is not some distant event. It must become the resurrection in our own space and time. It must happen among us, 2015!



## IT TAKES TIME TO UNPACK EASTER

Our Christian religion is based on revelation. This means that God breaks through into our lives. We may hunger for God but we cannot locate God with our own efforts. Revelation means that God is searching for us! God breaks through into our lives, whether or not we are open to God.

Revelation is real. God is deliberate!

The standard is the unexpected encounter that Moses had with God in the burning bush. Moses was trying to reestablish his life, raise his family and raise his sheep. He was the most unlikely of persons to be chosen by God.

Yet, God reveals what he wants Moses to do! Lead my people (the slaves in Egypt) to freedom. We know that Moses makes all kinds of excuses to avoid following through on the plans of God.

The point is that this is how God works. He bursts through the security bars of our lives. He has definite plans for us.

During these fifty days of Easter our parish is meant to unpack the meaning of Christ's resurrection. We are challenged to examine and



take ownership of the resurrection among us today.

Always consider the resurrection as an event that actually happened in the life of Jesus during the night. But the resurrection must always be an event of God's revelation in our own time and place. Christ must be risen among us today!

The plan of God is very simple to understand. God became flesh in Jesus. The Son of God was a real person who worked as a construction worker, suffered the hot sun, endured the bickering of his neighbors. But it was precisely through his humanity that he revealed and gave us God. Now, after the resurrection we know that his teachings and miracles were an expression of what God is really like. His life was a true revelation of God.

Now, when the Gospel is read and proclaimed in the Sunday Eucharist this is divine revelation. This is God witnessing to us what it means to live with God and to become truly human.

As the disciples of Jesus, receive the Scriptures this Sunday as the very revelation of the Son of God. This is God speaking to you. This



is God sharing divine life with you. This is the Son of God moving within us.

## CHECK LIST: IS REVELATION A 'NOW' MOMENT?

1. When we are given the Word of God on Sunday our parish receives it as God's revelation in the here and how? Yes/No
2. I deliberately pray with the sense that God's revelation is not complete. It must happen in my life and my church?  
Yes/No
3. I take seriously that in God's plan I am meant to be the living face of Jesus among the people with whom I live?  
Yes/No
4. There is a sense of humility in my parish that we have much more to learn about the resurrection of Jesus?  
Yes/No



## THE SENDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We are living in the sphere of God. We have been chosen to share the very life of Jesus Christ and become the living extension of the person, the mercy and the love of God. What has happened in the life of Jesus must now happen within each one of the believers. Our lives must become the living extension of Jesus Christ.

This Sunday we hear very clearly that Jesus will ask the Father (the source of the Godhead) to give us an 'Advocate' [a helper] to be with us forever. (Jn. 14,16) This is the Holy Spirit. The very life and person of God is being given to us.

This awareness may be rather weak in our Christian consciousness today but we want to open our lives to the giving of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God comes to us, not to make us feel good and secure. Just like Jesus, the Spirit of God has been given to us to do the work of God.

When Jesus began his ministry he stood up in the prayer house (the synagogue) and made his own the words of the prophet Isaiah. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to bring release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." (Lk. 4,18-19) These words were an accurate description of the life and mission of Jesus.

Now, the Spirit is given to us to be the living hands and heart of Jesus in the world. We too have been given a definite mission by the risen Jesus.

Being moved by the Holy Spirit means to have our eyes open to the poor and the suffering right around us. Human beings can become so self-centered that they become blind to anyone who suffers or is neglected right around them. It may be the co-worker who is going through a terrible divorce. The feelings are raw! The anger is strong at the many hurts this break up is causing. Be alert: perhaps the best and strongest assistance you can bring is just to listen and be present to the pain of your co-worker!

The Holy Spirit has been given toward the many messy situations of our lives!

## SEND YOUR HOLY SPIRIT UPON US! NOW!

Holy Spirit, give us the gift of honest eyesight, that is, to see the pain and suffering of others right around me. May I not walk over them, avoiding and ignoring the help that I can give them in this tough season of life.

Holy Spirit, season my conscience with the strong seasoning of justice and peace. Energize me to work to correct places and times where people are exploited, not paid a fair and living wage and pushed aside in our society.

Holy Spirit, give my heart the simplicity of a child that I can see and enjoy all the blessings that you will shower on my life this very day. May there be joy in my face when I recognize your blessings!

# PRAY THE SCRIPTURES

*The Resurrection must spring forth in new life within us*



His life must fill our lives

## RESURRECTION SURPRISES

HOLY SPIRIT GERMINATE IN OUR CHURCH

The Resurrection is meant to be like the spring rain and sunshine. Everything is meant to sprout and grow through the Holy Spirit.

PRAY OVER THESE IMPORTANT WORDS FROM OUR SUNDAY READINGS.

## KEY WORDS

**John 14,15** "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."



**John 14,16**

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever.

**John 14,17** This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.



**John 14,17**

You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

**John 14,18**

I will not leave you orphaned

**John 14,18**

I am coming to you.

## EASTER. LET GO OF YOUR FEARS!

How often has this happened to you? At work there is one toxic mouth that always finds fault with other people. If he cannot find something wrong with their work he will criticize their tattoos. And you walked away wishing you had stood up to this toxic mouth. You were afraid to say what needed to be said.

How much good is left undone because fear dominates our lives?

Fear of being criticized can paralyze us if we do not come to terms with our fears and hesitations.

This is where we pray this Easter season that we are given the insight to name our fears and be given strength to overcome our fears to do good. We will be criticized and misunderstood but we will be doing the right thing.

The Holy Spirit was given to the disciples in order that the Good News of Jesus would not die in the embers of good intentions. They were strengthened

to go out and witness with their lives what God is doing among us.

