

CELEBRATE EASTER

Second Sunday of Easter

The way to bring real joy into your life is to devote yourself to creating something that gives you meaning and purpose.

Acts 5:12-16

Easter changed everything! And Changed by the Easter event, people began to see the power of God at work in their lives. Easter transformed their life and gave them new sense of faith! They witnessed the healing power of Jesus at work in his disciples. They saw frightened men boldly proclaiming the message and the presence of their master, Jesus. The community of believers began to grow, and the message of Jesus began to spread.

May your Easter experience transform your lives!

Psalms 118

This is an all-embracing, universal, missionary Psalm inviting all people to thank God and proclaim His steadfast love. The Psalmist calls Israel (the people of God), the house of Aaron (the priestly class) and those who fear the Lord (the Gentile converts) – all people, including the Gentiles (heathens) to praise and proclaim God's enduring love.

The Church has been singing this Psalm at Easter as it is an all-inclusive Psalm, inviting all people, including the Gentiles proselytes to praise God.

**Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
For his mercy endures for ever.
Let the house of Israel say,
His mercy endures for ever...**

Revelation 1:9-19

John describes his experience of the risen Lord while he was on the island of Patmos. This experience transformed his life and gave him a new courage and a new freedom from his fears. He experienced the Holy Spirit calling him to write his experience for all, "write on a scroll what you see" and felt being empowered to respond to his call, "he touched me with the right hand".

May the Holy Spirit empower you to fulfill your mission in life.

John 20:19-31

The early Christians had new insights into all the things Jesus said and did while he was among them when they recognized that Jesus had risen from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus was an act of love by which God had transformed everyone and everything. This enabled them to understand the meaning of the cross and why Jesus had to die.

The resurrection of Jesus offered new possibilities of forgiveness, peace, faith, hope, love..... Even the reality of doubt has gained a new meaning and value. The reality of doubt began to be seen as an integral part of our journey of faith. Thomas stands out in today's Gospel as a source of encouragement for all believers. As a questioning person, Thomas moved from skepticism and disbelief to a firm and committed faith.

May the Holy Spirit bless and transform your disbelief and all your doubts and all your fears and empower you to respond to God's call in faithfulness and love!

Easter changed everything! Men and women experienced transformation of their lives. Frightened men became fearless proclaimers of the good news of Jesus and ministers of God's forgiving and healing presence among his people. Denials were turned to affirmations of love and dedicated service as in the case of Peter and doubts were changed to confession of faith as in the case of Thomas. Men who were hiding in fear were empowered to move freely and proclaim their joy in the risen Lord.

Easter did change everything! Transformation of people did happen! Be open to the transforming power of the resurrection of Jesus!

Saint of the Day, April 27 - St. Zita of Lucca and 17 other saints are remembered this day.

Zita was born into a poor family in Tuscany in the village of Monsagrati around the year 1212. At the age of 12, she became a servant in the Fatinelli household. For a long time, she was unjustly despised, overburdened, reviled, and often beaten by her employers and fellow servants for her hard work and obvious goodness. The constant abuse was powerless to deprive her of her inward peace, her love of those who wronged her, and her respect for her employers. By this meek and humble self-restraint, Zita at last succeeded in overcoming the malice of her fellow-servants and her employers, so much so that she was placed in charge of all the affairs of the house. Her faith had enabled her to persevere against their abuse, and her constant piety gradually moved the family to a religious awakening.

Zita considered her work as an employment assigned to her by God, and as part of her penance, and obeyed her master and mistress in all things as being placed over her by God. She always rose several hours before the rest of the family to pray and to attend mass every morning with great devotion before beginning the work of the day. Throughout her life, Zita found a source of strength and consolation in the Mass and Holy Communion, which frequently moved her to tears. Despite her many responsibilities, she frequently set aside time to recall God's presence through contemplative prayer. After foretelling her own death and spiritually preparing for it, Saint Zita died in Lucca on April 27, 1271.

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