

CELEBRATE EASTER

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

**How do you know if your purpose is fulfilled. If you are alive it isn't.
Jesus fulfilled his purpose in dying and rising again.**

The journey that we began in ashes on Ash Wednesday brings us now to the fire of Easter. Unlike the fire of destruction, fear and terror, we encounter the purifying, sanctifying, life-creating fire that gives light to a dark and despairing world. It is the fire that lights the Paschal candle which proclaims: "the light of Christ". It is the fire that brings us into the light of Christ and lights up our own path. Hold out your candle for all to see! Carry your candle into the darkness and light up your world!

Acts 10:34-43

Peter spoke to a people who believed that they were the chosen people of God and that they had an exclusive connection with God. His words would have challenged and may even have shattered some of the traditional assumptions with which the listeners had lived. Peter's statements were bold and convincing: Jesus came into the world to teach, to heal, to forgive, to suffer and to die for all – "for all" would have been difficult to accept. Peter spoke of God's universal saving plan in the life death and resurrection of Jesus.

Be open to the transforming power of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Invite someone today to share in the joy of the resurrection of Jesus.

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 forever.
Let the house of Israel say,
His mercy endures forever.**

Colossians 3:1-4

The author of this letter calls his readers to live the “risen life” because “you were raised with Christ” ...we have died with Christ and are raised up to live in his company, in his presence. To live the risen life is to live as Easter people, people of the resurrection, to live a life of union with Christ, to begin a new way of thinking and acting and relating that is centered on the realities of the Kingdom of God.

John 20:1-9

This excerpt tells us the moving story of Mary of Magdala going to the tomb of Jesus early in the morning and running to Peter and John to tell them that the tomb was empty.

Peter and John went to the tomb and found everything as Mary had described. This excerpt concludes by saying that they believed without understanding the scripture “that he had to rise from the dead”.

Real faith is born of relationship. It is not an affirmation or acceptance of doctrines or acceptance of details of an event that can be verified scientifically or otherwise. To believe is to relate...to believe is to trust...to believe is to be intimate...to believe is to be in communion. Our belief in the resurrection and our commitment to live a resurrected life is the result of our communion with the risen Christ.

Saint of the day, April 20 - St. Conrad of Parzham and 9 other saints are remembered this day.

Conrad was born on December 22, 1818, on the family farm in Bad Griesbach, now a part of the town of Parzham, then in the Kingdom of Bavaria, now part of Germany. Baptized Johann Evangelist, he was the second youngest of 12 children, five of whom died in infancy.

John spent his early years on the family farm. His mother died when he was 14 and his father two years later. After attending a parish mission in 1838, he decided to enter the religious life. The following year, at the age of thirty-one, and after distributing his inheritance, he was admitted, as a lay brother among the Capuchin Franciscan friars. He made his profession in 1852 and was assigned to the friary in Altoetting. Conrad spent most of his life, about 41 years, as porter in Altoetting, Bavaria, letting people into the friary and indirectly encouraging them to let God into their lives.

He had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and each day fervently recited the Rosary. On feast days he frequently made a journey to some remote shrine of the Blessed

Mother. During such pilgrimages, always made on foot, he was engaged in prayer, and when he returned in the evening, he was usually still fasting. Conrad spent hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. He regularly asked the Blessed Mother to intercede for him and for the many people he included in his prayers. On April 21, 1894, Conrad died in the friary where he had served for 41 years. He was canonized in 1934.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs