

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Brothers and Sisters,

Yesterday, we celebrated Easter and reflected on being called to move on with confidence in the presence of the Risen Lord with us on our journey. We have made a wonderful journey through the season of Lent. It was a journey of faith, of conversion and of repentance and change of heart. We may not look different. But we know that we have grown through our Lenten journey. Our growth may not be tangible or measurable. But we know we have grown in our relationship with the Lord and our brothers and sisters just as the early Christians had.

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, reconciliation and peace and a deepened experience of faith, hope and love.

Easter changed everything! Men and women experienced a 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.

Changed by the Easter event, the first believers maintained a healthy unity among themselves despite differences. Distinctions of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, etc. were causes of friction and separation among them. But Easter changed everything! Belongingness to the saving cross and the death and resurrection of Christ changed them radically. They became a community in Christ! Easter transformed their life and gave them a new sense of being a community of faith!

May the Holy Spirit bless you, transform your disbelief, doubts and fears, and empower you to move on with confidence in the presence of the risen Lord on your journey as you go about doing your daily chores and fulfilling your responsibilities. God bless you and your family.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Days within the Octave of Easter

April 6-11, 2026

God had brought me to my knees and made me acknowledge my own nothingness,
and out of that knowledge I had been reborn.

I was no longer the center of my life
and therefore I could see God in everything.

(Bede Griffiths)

April 6 – Monday within the Octave of Easter

Stillness is where creativity and solutions to problems are found.

(Eckhart Tolle)

Acts 2:14, 22-32

Peter makes very bold proclamations about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The man who denied knowing Jesus has now risen to great courage and freedom that he can now affirm who Jesus is for him and for the world. The man who was afraid to give witness to Jesus now says: "This is the Jesus God has raised up and we are his witnesses".

The risen Jesus gives us a new power and freedom to be his witnesses in the world.

Psalm 16

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge,
I say to the Lord, "My Lord are you."
O Lord, my allotted portion and my cup,
you it is who hold fast my lot.

Mathew 28:8-15

Mathew tells us that Mary of Magdala came to the tomb of Jesus with the other Mary. They had a tremendous experience in which an angel told them that Jesus had been raised from the dead and that his tomb was empty. They were given a mission to go and tell the disciples: "He has been raised from the dead and now goes ahead of you to Galilee, where you will see him".

The women were fearful, but they loved much and with much love, they went to visit the tomb of their master. They looked beyond their fears and their tears, and they found their master and friend, Jesus, alive!

Mathew tells us, in the Gospel reading of today, that the women, “half-overjoyed and half-fearful”, ran to carry the good news to the disciples. They found an urgency to run because their master was alive and they ran, carrying good news. They loved much and they ran with love.....they were blessed again..... Jesus met them in this urgency, in this “running with good news” and he gifted them again, “PEACE” and send them to the disciples with the message that he would meet them in Galilee.

There is an urgency, now more than ever before, for us, to announce the good news of the resurrection, the good news of the gift of God’s peace. We are people of the resurrection, people gifted with God’s peace. We must proclaim this good news.

Saint of the Day, April 6 - St. Crescentia Hoess and 15 other saints are remembered this day.

Anna Hoess was born on October 20, 1682 in Kaufbeuren, Bavaria, Germany, to Matthias Hoess and his wife, Lucia Hoermann. Her father, Matthias Hoess, a simple weaver, was barely able, despite diligent work, to provide the necessities for his family of eight children. Anna became a weaver, but her greatest ambition was to enter the local convent of the Tertiary Franciscans in Kaufbeuren, in whose chapel she often prayed. Her father, being a poor weaver did not have enough money to pay the customary dowry and so she was not admitted.

Anna hoped and prayed to be admitted among the consecrated virgins in the convent of the Tertiaries in her native town. But the convent was poor, and the superiors declared that they could not receive her without a dowry. Then the Protestant Mayor of the town lent his aid. He had rendered the convent a great service; when the nuns came to offer their expressions of gratitude, he told them that they might now, as a favor to him, accept the daughter of the poor weaver Hoess.

Anna was received into the convent and took the name Crescentia, but she was made to feel that she had come without a dowry and was received only through force of necessity. She was compelled to do the lowliest work of a maid; she was regarded as a burden, frowned upon and despised. Her readiness to be obliging and friendly was interpreted as flattery and hypocrisy. The nuns would gladly have gotten rid of her if they were not obligated to the mayor.

Conditions improved four years later when a new superior was elected who realized her virtue. Crescentia herself was appointed mistress of novices. She so won the love and respect of the sisters that, upon the death of the superior, Crescentia was unanimously elected to that position. Under her, the financial state of the convent improved and her reputation in spiritual matters spread. She was soon being consulted by princes and princesses; bishops and cardinals too sought her advice. And yet, a true daughter of Francis, she remained ever humble.

Bodily afflictions and pain were always with her. First it was headaches and toothaches. Then she lost the ability to walk, her hands and feet gradually becoming so crippled that her body curled up into a fetal position. Despite her sufferings she was filled with peace and joy as she died on Easter Sunday, on April 5, 1744. She was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2001.

April 7 – Tuesday within the Octave of Easter

Serenity is the tranquil balance of heart and mind.

Acts 2:36-41

Peter reminded the Jews that Jesus, whom they crucified, is Messiah and Lord. He called them to conversion, a change of heart, to Baptism, to forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Many responded to his call.

Easter reminds us of our own Baptism...we are immersed into the mystery of God's life and love...now we must live and move in this mystery!

Psalm 33

**Our soul waits for the Lord,
Who is our help and our shield.
May your kindness, O Lord, be upon us,
Who have put our hope in you.**

John 20:11-18

Mary of Magdala wept, standing by the tomb of Jesus. She saw two angels through her tears...behind her stood Jesus whom she did not recognize. She was afraid, she wept, she did not understand the scriptures...But she recognized the voice of Jesus, the one she loved much.

Our ability to recognize the voice of Jesus depends on how much we have listened to him, known him and loved him. We recognize the voice of the one we love!

Jesus tells Mary not to hang on to him, but to go and announce the good news to the disciples. She went and she proclaimed: "I have seen the Lord".

It is up to us, Easter people, people of the resurrection, people of hope to proclaim the good news today!

We are called to deepen our experience of the risen Lord and are sent to share the good news with the world around us!

Saint of the Day, April 7 - St. John Baptist de la Salle and 30 other saints are remembered this day.

John Baptist de la Salle was born into a wealthy family in Rheims, France on April 30, 1651. The son of aristocratic parents, he had the opportunity for an excellent education. When he had completed his classical, literary, and philosophical courses, he was sent to Paris to enter the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice. His mother died in 1671, and his father in 1672. This circumstance obliged him to leave Saint-Sulpice. He was now twenty-one, the head of the family, and as such had the responsibility of educating his four brothers and two sisters.

De la Salle completed his theological studies and was ordained to the priesthood at the age of 26 on April 9, 1678. He fully intended to work among the wealthy people of his area throughout his career. Unexpectedly, De La Salle's life changed dramatically. A promise to a dying friend to assist a group of Sisters in their work with orphan girls brought De La Salle to education. Further assistance to a friend starting a school for poor boys in Rheims solidified his true vocation as an educator, an endeavor which would consume his entire life.

By 1684, having given up his personal wealth and title in society, De La Salle brought a group of schoolmasters together as the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (also called Christian Brothers or De La Salle Brothers). The Institute was soon recognized as an official Congregation of Religious in the Roman Catholic Church. The Congregation's primary purpose was to serve the educational needs of society, particularly among the poor.

De La Salle and his Brothers took up the cause of education vigorously. In addition to the founding of schools in 22 cities by the time of his death in 1719, De La Salle contributed significantly to the entire field of education through his writings and innovative methodology. Afflicted with asthma and rheumatism in his last years, he died at age 68 on Good Friday on April 7, 1719. On May 24, 1900, John Baptist de La Salle was declared a saint of the Roman Catholic Church. Fifty years later, Pope Pius XII declared John Baptist de La Salle the Patron Saint of Teachers.

April 8 – Wednesday within the Octave of Easter

**Peace is not absence of conflict,
it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.**

(Ronald Reagan)

Acts 3:1-10

The disciples continued the healing ministry of Jesus. Peter said, he had “neither silver nor gold” ...and called, the cripple to “walk”, in the name of Jesus” and the cripple walked. Peter acknowledged his powerlessness and relied on the power of Jesus. What Peter offered was his absolute trust in Jesus.

Learn to trust in the power of Jesus to heal and bring us wholeness.

Psalm 105

**Give thanks to the Lord, invoke his name;
and make known among the nations his deeds.
Sing to him, sing his praise,
Proclaim all his wondrous deeds.**

Luke 24:13-35

We read about two disciples on the road to Emmaus, discussing all the events surrounding the death of Jesus. Jesus came along and began to walk with them. The disciples did not recognize him. They were preoccupied with the events and failed to see anything beyond...

Look beyond what you see and what you hear...the disciples had to learn to look beyond to see their Savior and Lord.

Jesus and the disciples entered into a deep conversation about the events surrounding the death of Jesus. Jesus explained to them about how the Scriptures were fulfilled in his death, stayed with them and shared their bread. He opened their eyes and they saw and they believed. And they said, "Were not our hearts burning inside us as he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures?" There was a longing, an urgent longing in their hearts...there was a passion, and they became aware of it and their hearts were set on fire and they returned to tell the others their experience.

Learn to listen to your heart...listen to the gentle whispers of the Spirit...get in touch with the longing in our heart!

Saint of the Day, April 8 - St. Julie Billiart and 26 other saints are remembered this day.

Julie was born on July 12, 1751, at Cuvilly, France, into a family of well-to-do farmers. From her early childhood, she showed an interest in religion and in helping the sick and poor. Though the first years of her life were relatively peaceful and uncomplicated, Julie had to take up manual work as a young teen when her family lost its wealth. However, she spent her spare time teaching catechism to young people and to the farm workers.

By the age of seven, she knew the catechism by heart, and used to gather her companions around her to recite it and explain it to them. Her education was very basic at the village school kept by her uncle and in spiritual matters, she made such progress that the parish priest allowed her to make her First Communion and to be confirmed at the age of nine. She took a vow of chastity five years later.

She was held in very high esteem for her virtue and piety, and was commonly called, "the saint of Cuvilly". Witnessing an attempt at her father's life, Julie was paralyzed and became a complete invalid for 30 years. She spend most her time in prayer and contemplation and the rest of her time was occupied in making linens and laces for the altar and in catechizing the village children whom she gathered around her bed, giving special attention to those who were preparing for their First Communion.

When the French Revolution broke out in 1789, revolutionary forces became aware of her allegiance to fugitive priests. With the help of friends, she was smuggled out of Cuvilly in a haycart. She then spent several years hiding in Compiègne in Northern France, being moved from house to house despite her growing physical pain. She even lost the power of speech for a time. It was at this time that she had a vision in which she saw Calvary surrounded by women in religious habits and heard a voice saying, "Behold these spiritual daughters whom I give you in an institute marked by the cross."

As time passed and Julie continued her mobile life, she made the acquaintance of an aristocratic woman, Françoise Blin de Bourdon, who shared Julie's interest in teaching the faith. In 1803, the two women began the Institute of Notre Dame, which was dedicated to the education of the poor, young Christian girls, and the training of catechists. The following year, the first Sisters of Notre Dame made their vows. That was the same year that Julie recovered from the illness: She was able to walk for the first time in 22 years.

Though Julie had always been attentive to the special needs of the poor and that always remained her priority, she also became aware that other classes in society needed Christian instruction. From the founding of the Sisters of Notre Dame until her death, Julie was on the road, opening a variety of schools in France and Belgium that served the poor and the wealthy, vocational groups, teachers. Ultimately, Julie and Françoise moved the motherhouse to Namur, Belgium. Julie died there in 1816. She was canonized in 1969.

April 9 – Thursday within the Octave of Easter

**Tranquility is a certain quality of mind
which no condition or fortune can alter.**

(Samuel Johnson)

Acts 3:11-26

Peter had healed a lame man and people began to follow him. Peter told them that it was not his holiness that healed the man.....it was the power of faith in the name of Jesus whom they rejected and crucified and who rose from the dead. Peter called them to change their ways and

turn from ignorance to faith in the power of Jesus who died for them and who rose again as he had promised.

Be humble and learn to trust in the power of the risen Lord!

Psalm 8

**O Lord, Our God,
How glorious is your name over all the earth!
What is man that you should be mindful of him,
Or the son of man that you should care for him?**

Luke 24:35-48

Two of the disciples, who had an experience of the risen Jesus, on the road to Emmaus, returned to Jerusalem and shared their experience with the other disciples. Jesus walked into their midst and said: "Peace". This was the gift that Jesus had promised the disciples as his farewell gift. Jesus shared bread with them and helped them understand the recent events in light of the Scriptures. He explained to them the reality of the resurrection, the necessity and value of the cross and the urgency of announcing the good news of the resurrection.

The risen Jesus became real to the disciples in the breaking of the bread. The cross was not an emergency measure when all else failed. It was in the plan of God, the sign of His love, the sign of total giving in love. The disciples of Jesus, now as it was then, have an urgent mission of giving witness to the resurrection of Jesus and the meaning of the cross.

Be humble! Learn to surrender to the plan of God! Trust that God has a plan for you! Believe that even the suffering and the cross that come your way have a meaning and purpose in God's plan.

Saint of the Day, April 9 - St. Casilda and 14 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Casilda was the daughter of a Muslim king of Toledo, Spain in the 10th century. We do not have accurate information about her birth and early life. Casilda was a devout Muslim but was kind to Christian prisoners. She used to carry bread hidden in her clothes to feed them. Legend tells us that once she was stopped by Muslim soldiers and asked to reveal what she was carrying in her skirt. When she began to show them, the bread turned into a bouquet of roses.

She became ill as a young woman but did not trust that any of the local Arab doctors could cure her. So she made a pilgrimage to the shrine of San Vincenzo in northern Spain and sought the

healing waters of the shrine and was healed of her illness. In response, she became a Christian and lived a life of solitude and penance not far from the miraculous spring. It's said that she lived to be 100 years old. Her death likely occurred around the year 1050.

April 10 - Friday within the Octave of Easter

**A calm mind brings inner strength and self-confidence
And that is very important for good health.**

(Dalai Lama)

Acts 4:1-12

Peter and John were arrested and put in jail for proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus. They were brought before the elders and the scribes and high priests and questioned about the source of their authority and power for teaching and healing. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, boldly proclaimed that the preaching and healing were done in the name of Jesus and that salvation has come through Jesus.

Be strong! Be courageous! Stand your ground!

Psalm 118

**Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
for his mercy endures forever.**

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

John 21:1-14

Peter and his friends fished all night without success. At daybreak, they found Jesus on the shore. At the word of Jesus, they cast their nets again and had a great catch.

The unsuccessful and disappointing night is turned into joy because they listened to the word of Jesus. Trust in the word of Jesus helps us rise above failures, disappointments, etc.

The disciples, who worked hard all night without success, were asked to try again and take different approach, "cast your net off to the starboard side". They tried again without complaint, they were open to try something different and they had a great catch.

Try again....and again! Take a different approach.....a new approach....try something that has not been tried before..... Never give up!

They came ashore and found that Jesus had prepared breakfast for them, fish and bread. They break bread again and recognized Jesus for the third time after the resurrection.

He met them again and again bringing them comfort and deepening their faith in the resurrection. Jesus did not give up on the disciples who had difficulty understanding the Scriptures and understanding all that he had told them while he was alive.

Reflect on the compassion and patience of Jesus. Be compassionate! Be patient!

Saint of the Day, April 10 - St. Magdalen of Canossa and 10 other saints are remembered this day

Magdalene of Canossa was born on March 1, 1774 in Verona, Northern Italy. When her parents died, she and her siblings were placed under the care of their uncle. At age 15 she announced that she wished to become a nun. She spent ten months in a Carmelite convent but discerned that this was not her vocation and so returned home and undertook the running of her large estate. In 1797 Napoleon was a guest at their palace where she received him; he returned as a guest twice more in 1805 and 1807.

Canossa saw her town as one in which the poor suffered and desired to serve their needs. Wealth and privilege did not prevent her from serving Christ in the poor. Nor did the protests of her relatives, concerned that such work was beneath her. For years she worked among the poor and sick in hospitals and in their homes, as well as among delinquent and abandoned girls.

In her mid-20s, Magdalen began offering lodging to poor girls in her own home. In time she opened a school, which offered practical training and religious instruction. As other women joined her in the work, the new Congregation of the Canossian Daughters of Charity (Canossian Sisters) emerged. Over time, houses were opened throughout Italy. Members of the new religious congregation focused on the educational and spiritual needs of women. Magdalen also founded a smaller congregation for priests and brothers. She died on April 10, 1835. Pope John Paul II canonized her in 1988.

April 11 – Saturday within the Octave of Easter

Serenity is the calm acceptance of the unknown.

Acts 4:13-21

The priests and elders were amazed at the fearlessness and confidence of the apostles who were uneducated men. They warned the apostles not to speak in the name of Jesus. But the apostles continued to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Be strong! Stand your ground! Proclaim the good news!

Psalm 118

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

Mark 16:9-15

Jesus rose from the dead and first appeared to Mary Magdalene, but the followers of Jesus refused to believe her testimony. Neither did they believe the two disciples, who had an experience of the risen Jesus, while they were on the road. Finally, Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples and rebuked them for their disbelief. Then he sent them with the mission: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all creation".

The disciples did not expect Jesus to be visiting Mary of Magdala after his resurrection. After all, her past was not great, and she was not one of the specially chosen apostles. She did not fit the common criteria for a visit from the world beyond!..

Be open! The Lord has his own way of surprising us! He comes to us through the most unexpected people, events, places and situations!

Jesus surprised them again by sending them with his message to fulfill his mission. Men of weak faith.....men who could not see beyond their disappointment.....men, who did not grasp all that Jesus said to them about his death and resurrection while he was among them, were sent to proclaim the good news of the resurrection!

Don't wait and don't hesitate to share and announce the good news of God's love till you have fully matured in faith!

Saint of the Day, April 11 - St. Stanislaus and 9 other saints are remembered this day.

Stanislaus was born on July 26, 1030 at Szczepanów, a village in Lesser Poland, the only son of the noble and pious Wielisław and Bogna. He was educated at a cathedral school in Gniezno, then the capital of Poland and later, in Paris. On his return to Poland, Stanislaus was ordained a

priest by the Bishop of Kraków. He was subsequently made pastor of Czembocz near Cracow, canon and preacher at the cathedral, and later, vicar general.

After the Bishop's death in 1072, Stanislaus was elected his successor, but accepted the office only at the explicit command of Pope Alexander II. Stanislaus was one of the earliest native Polish bishops. He also became a ducal advisor and had some influence on Polish politics.

Stanislaus' major accomplishments included bringing papal legates to Poland, and reestablishment of a metropolitan see in Gniezno. Stanislaus encouraged King Bolesław to establish Benedictine monasteries to aid in the Christianization of Poland. During an expedition against the Grand Duchy of Kiev, Stanislaus became involved in the political situation of Poland. Known for his outspokenness, he aimed his attacks at the evils of the peasantry and the king, especially the unjust wars and immoral acts of King Boleslaus II.

The king first excused himself, then made a show of penance, then relapsed into his old ways. Stanislaus continued his open opposition, in spite of charges of treason and threats of death and finally excommunicated the king. Enraged, the latter ordered soldiers to kill the bishop. When they refused, the king killed Stanislaus with his own hands on April 11, 1079, in Kraków, Poland. He is remembered with Saints Thomas More and Thomas Becket for vigorous opposition to the evils of an unjust government.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Christ has not only spoken to us by his life,
but has also spoken for us by his death.
(Soren Kierkegaard)**



