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**SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2020**

# EASTER SUNDAY



"Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay." - Mt 28:5b-6

# WEEKLY PRAYER

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 12, 2020

- SUN 4/12** Acts 10:34a, 37-43/Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 [24]/Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8/Jn 20:1-9 or Mt 28:1-10
- MON 4/13** Acts 2:14, 22-33/Ps 16:1-2a and 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11 [1]/Mt 28:8-15
- TUE 4/14** Acts 2:36-41/Ps 33:4-5, 18-19, 20 and 22 [5b]/Jn 20:11-18
- WED 4/15** Acts 3:1-10/Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8-9 [3b]/Lk 24:13-35
- THR 4/16** Acts 3:11-26/Ps 8:2ab and 5, 6-7, 8-9 [2ab]/Lk 24:35-48
- FRI 4/17** Acts 4:1-12/Ps 118: 1-2 and 4, 22-24, 25-27a [22]/Jn 21:1-14
- SAT 4/18** Acts 4:13-21/Ps 118:1 and 14-15ab, 16-18, 19-21 [21a]/Mk 16:9-15
- SUN 4/19** Acts 2:42-47/Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24 [1]/1 Pt 1:3-9/Jn 20:19-31

## OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 12, 2020

- Sunday:** Easter Sunday
- Monday:** Monday within the Octave of Easter
- Tuesday:** Tuesday within the Octave of Easter
- Wednesday:** Wednesday within the Octave of Easter
- Thursday:** Thursday within the Octave of Easter
- Friday:** Friday within the Octave of Easter
- Saturday:** Saturday within the Octave of Easter
- Next Sunday:** 2nd Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy Sunday

## LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Our world wants us to believe that life is only what we make of it. Today, we realize how untrue that is. Life is ultimately about what God makes of it, and the resurrection of Jesus reveals this. Alleluia, Christ is risen! Who do you understand yourself to be? What we did yesterday, are doing today, and may do tomorrow pretty much determine how we perceive ourselves. We even perceive Jesus this way in limiting our vision of him

to his earthly accomplishments. But, we know through today's triumphant celebration that Christ is much more than his earthly legacy. The transfigured and resurrected Christ is the beginning, the end, and the fulfillment of all things and every person. All that Jesus did stands in second place to who we now know him to be. Do we realize that this will be our journey too? Christ is risen. Alleluia, alleluia!



# WORSHIP & MEDITATION



## FIRST READING

"He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead." (Acts 10:42)

## PSALM

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad. (Ps 118) or Alleluia

## SECOND READING

When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory. (Col 3:4)

## GOSPEL

Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. (Jn 20:8)

## ALTERNATE SECOND READING

1 Cor 5:6b-8

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## GOSPEL MEDITATION

### Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

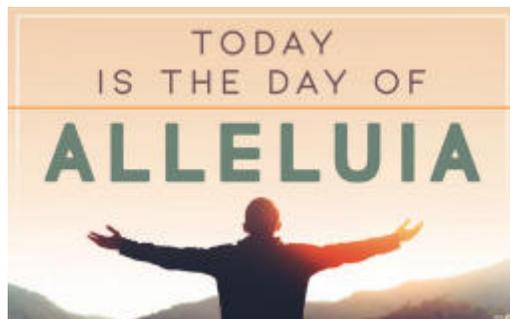
When we awoke this morning, we found ourselves blessed with another day. It is Easter Sunday. As that thought crossed our minds, did we find ourselves saying "so what" or "alleluia"? For many, today is truly a day of alleluia. For others, it is just another day of "so what." Faith makes a huge difference. It not only makes a difference in how we understand today and the significance of what we celebrate, it also makes a huge difference in terms of how we understand ourselves.

Succeed, live well, be productive, find your niche, follow your dreams, make money, protect your social status, be politically correct, and keep your preferences to yourself are pretty good examples of the messages our secular life wants us to hear. In and of themselves, they don't sound all that harmful. But when really examined, they are. The life of resurrection embodied in the Gospel tells us a much different story.

Life keeps us busy. We are always connected, distracted, occupied, and working. For many of us, an agenda awaits us before we even start our day, and unfinished stuff is brought with us when we retire at night. Make the best of life and "find your own road to happiness are messages we all too easily believe. The "so what" response to the new life of resurrection is often the result of believing that life is only what I make it. What God has to say isn't important to me securing my next raise.

Sadly, we live as if the grave is the end. While we may give the wonder of heaven a blink now and then, its glory really doesn't impress us or matter all that much. It's all about the here and now and what I need to do today to get where I want to be tomorrow. We tend to put off considering the one significant "tomorrow" that will come the millisecond after we take our last breath. When that happens, will we want to be thinking "so what?" or "alleluia"?

There is only one Jesus, one mission, and one resurrection. There is also only one of us. Have you ever pondered what one solitary, humble human life can do? Faith, not our world, tells us how special we are. We are not robots. We are not replaceable. We have one shot. There are no do-overs. Love is at our core and unites us together as one with the God of love who so desperately wants us to be with Him forever. This may not match our secular agenda, but it ought to make our true inner agenda leap for joy. There doesn't need to be an end. I can live forever. Alleluia!



# LITURGICAL LIFE

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### EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP

Recognize God In Your Ordinary Moments

#### Come to Christ

Life is perhaps God's greatest gift to each of us. Without life, we would be unable to experience all the wonder of this world, the love of family and friends, and the joy that comes from using our talents and skills. Life itself is more profound a gift than we can even truly contemplate.

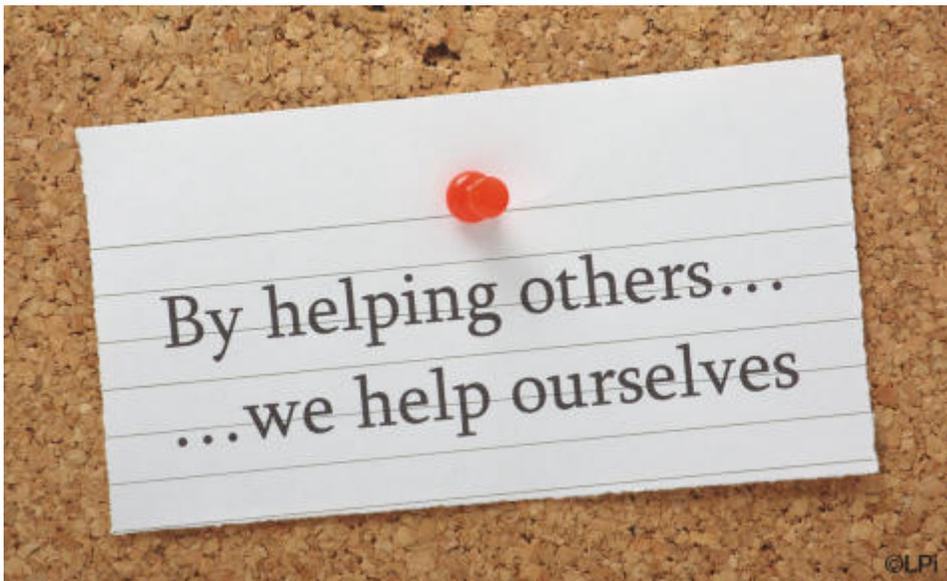
On Easter, we celebrate life. For on this day, Jesus Christ conquered death and gave to us the chance for a life eternal. The wonder, love, and joy of this world does not have to end. Through a life in Jesus Christ, these emotions are heightened, and we find even greater fulfillment in this world.

Maybe this Easter you are finding yourself open to taking a next step in your relationship with Jesus. This could be the moment you decide to follow Him more closely and take seriously all that he has given you. If so, welcome to the journey, where there are many other disciples on that same path who can help show you the way and share their stories. If not, hopefully it doesn't take a whole year for this possibility to be considered again. Jesus is alive and waiting to get closer to you. May this Easter season find you and Our Lord getting to know one another in a whole new way. Happy Easter!

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

### PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

Our parish is grateful for your continued support. Thank you!



### WHY DO WE DO THAT?

Catholic Life Explained:  
*Confessing Sins*

#### Question:

If I go to the Sacrament of Penance and end up repeating the same sins, does that mean I do not have a strong enough intention to amend my life?

#### Answer:

There is a popular expression that says, "Be patient. God isn't finished with me yet!" Growing in faith and holiness is an ongoing, life-long project, and our struggle with sin is at the heart of it. As St. Paul says, the good he intends to do, he does not do. The evil he does not intend, he does! It is not always a lack of intention, but more often the allure of evil that makes it difficult to change.

When we confess our sins, we are to come with a fully contrite heart. You need to reflect on your true feelings toward your actions before approaching the sacrament. After confession, there are strategies you can make to avoid falling into the same traps of sin. First, pray for and seek out strength and perseverance through multiple sacraments, charitable work, and personal sacrifice. Second, avoid occasions of sin when you might fail or be sorely tempted. In doing these things, remind yourself daily that it is a spiritual war we wage, and with God's grace, we will succeed.





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MOST REVEREND  
MICHAEL R. COTE, D.D.

### **Easter Message, 2020**

**“For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.” John 20:9**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

The passage from the Gospel of John cited above is the last verse proclaimed in the Gospel for the Mass of Easter Day. It speaks to us of a very interesting dimension that is common to many of the events and appearances surrounding the Resurrection: the disciples are confused. They do not yet understand all that the Scriptures had foretold and that Jesus Himself had revealed to them during his public ministry. This is not to say that they do not still have faith. The faith of the disciples was understandably shaken by the horror of the events of Good Friday, and the emotional highs and lows that they experienced that first Holy Week had taken their toll on them as well.

On the morning of the Resurrection, as the disciples stared into the cold, dark, but empty tomb, they simply were left with more questions than answers. Yet, the seeds of faith and hope, planted deeply in their hearts, remained. In the days and weeks that followed, these seeds would grow exponentially as they both encountered and continued to be taught by the Risen Lord. It was only in the Lord's time that they would come to understand, at a deeply profound level, what on that first Easter morning confused and even frightened them.

Dear brothers and sisters, it is clear to us all that the events of these past months surrounding the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic have greatly disrupted our lives. At a profoundly human level, even the greatest scientific minds are confused and our understanding of how we will move forward as a nation and as a global society is uncertain. These anxieties and so many more that we are experiencing have had profound effects on our lives of faith, and even on the manner in which that faith is practiced. This is, without question, among the most painful developments of these days for me as your Bishop, for your priests, as it is for all of you: that this Easter we are separated, physically. The pain you are experiencing by not being able to receive the Risen Lord in the Most Holy Eucharist is real and is a testament to your love and faith in His abiding presence among us.

But it is from the midst of the confusion, uncertainty and pain of this time, that the Lord is continuing to call us on to deeper faith. As our Holy Father Pope Francis reflected in his meditation at the extraordinary *Urbi et Orbi* blessing on March 27: *Lord, you are calling to us, calling us to faith. Which is not so much believing that you exist, but coming to you and trusting in you... You are calling on us to seize this time of trial as a time of choosing... a time to choose what matters and what passes way, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is time to get our lives back on track with regard to you, Lord and to others...*

We are once again confronted with the paradox of the Paschal Mystery – that from suffering, pain and death come the hope and promise of happiness, peace and eternal life. Our faith teaches us clearly that God never allows evil to have the final word. The Lord, in his infinite wisdom and power, can and is using this time to bring about tremendous good by challenging us to understand, appreciate and rely upon our Christian faith more deeply. As Pope Francis teaches us: he is inviting us once again to choose Him and to cling to his love above all else in our lives.

And so, we continue our journey of faith together, confident that we too will rise with Him; not only from this present distress with deepened faith and renewed hope, but unto life everlasting with him and all the Saints in the kingdom of Heaven. Although this Easter will be celebrated in a manner unlike any of us have experienced in our lifetimes, we rejoice all the more because no matter what may befall us, nothing can take away the central truths upon which our faith is securely founded: Christ is risen; he is truly risen! Alleluia!!

Please be assured of my prayerful closeness to you all, particularly in these challenging times. A blessed and grace-filled Easter to you and your loved ones!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael R. Cote  
Bishop of Norwich

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