

MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED

April 1, 2018 – EASTER SUNDAY

Spiritual Ponderings 7 Joys of St. Joseph

In my life, I have seen St. Joseph go through a little bit of a renaissance in recent years. When I was in grade school, most images of St. Joseph made St. Joseph appear as an old man. Somewhere in high school, and I think because of modern Scripture studies, the Church realized that St. Joseph was probably closer in age to the Blessed Virgin Mary than people had originally thought. Now, many of the images and descriptions of St. Joseph depict St. Joseph to be a young teenager. Last spring, I stumbled upon the devotion called the Seven Sorrows and Seven Joys of St. Joseph and last April, I devoted my Spiritual Ponderings to the Seven Sorrows of St. Joseph and so now this April, I would like to turn to the Seven Joys of St. Joseph.

1. The Message of the Angel (Matthew 1:20)

Saint Joseph must have been a pretty low point in his life when the angel Gabriel appeared to him in a dream. Mary, the woman that he had loved had just confessed to him that she was pregnant and Joseph had to know that the child was not his. It probably hurt him all the more when the supposed excuse that Mary gave him for her pregnancy both seemed preposterous and also involved his religion which I think it is safe to assume was very important to him. I know that when someone harms me I have one level of

anger and I know that I can go to a higher level of anger if the person who harmed me tries to excuse their behavior with a very bad excuse and especially an excuse that seems to mock something that is very dear to me.

Upon hearing the fact that Mary had indeed been telling the truth, Joseph must have been elated and filled with joy. Some commentators point out that the angel Gabriel came to Joseph in a dream making us assume that it was night outside. Commentators wonder if Matthew is not also giving us an insight into the soul of St. Joseph. Some commentators suggest that Joseph was suffering a long period of desolation in his prayer life and the vision of the angel was the beginning of a time of desolation. This would also make St. Joseph symbolic of the Israelite people, who have felt God's absence for so long. God was once again beginning to act in their lives in a very visible and real way.

I believe that St. Joseph was rejoicing in the fact that he was going to get to be a father. To be a parent (even a step-parent) should be seen as opportunity to grow in holiness by accepting the responsibility of helping a child grow. I always liked the fact that a local morning DJ referred to his children as "Bonus child" instead of stepchild.

How much better would a world be today, if true fathers would



stand up and take responsibility for their own biological children? I think the following song lyrics from Brad Paisley song:

*When a single mom goes out on a date with somebody new * It always winds up feeling more like a job interview * My mama used to wonder if she'd ever meet someone * Who wouldn't find out about me and then turn around and run*

*I met the man I call my dad when I was five years old * He took my mom out to a movie and for once I got to go * A few months later I remember lying there in bed * I overheard him pop the question and I prayed that she'd say yes*

*And then all of a sudden ah it seemed so strange to me * How we went from something's*

*missing to a family * Lookin' back
all I can say about all the things
he did for me * Is I hope I'm at
least half the dad that he didn't
have to be*

*I met the girl who's now my wife
about three years ago * We had
the perfect marriage but we
wanted somethin' more
Now here I stand surrounded by*

*our family and friends Crowded
'round the nursery window as
they bring the baby in*

*And then all of a sudden ah it
seemed so strange to me * How
we had gone from something's
missing to a family * Lookin'
through the glass I think about
the man that's standing next to
me And I hope I'm at least half*

*the dad that he didn't have to be
* Lookin' back all I can say about
all the things he did for me * Is I
hope I'm at least half the dad
that he didn't have to be * I
hope I'm at least half the dad
that he didn't have to be *
'Cause he didn't have to be * You
know he didn't have to be*

Breaking Open the Word

April 1, 2018 Easter Sunday - The Resurrection of the Lord - The Mass of Easter Day Lectionary: 42 Gospel JN 20:1-9

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

Or **Gospel MK 16:1-7**

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go and anoint him. Very early when the sun had risen, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb. They were saying to one another, "Who will roll back the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back; it was very large. On entering the tomb they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe, and they were utterly amazed. He said to them, "Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him. But go and tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you.'"

Or **Gospel LK 24:13-35**

That very day, the first day of the week, two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came

back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see." And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures. As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?" So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

Spiritual Reflection:

"If man had his way, the plan of redemption would be an endless and bloody conflict. In reality, salvation was bought not by Jesus' fist, but by His nail-pierced hands; not by muscle but by love; not by vengeance but by forgiveness; not by force but by sacrifice. Jesus Christ our Lord surrendered in order that He might win; He destroyed His enemies by dying for them and conquered death by allowing death to conquer Him." - A.W. Tozer



Spiritual Questions:

1. How do address your enemies?
2. How do you handle conflict?
3. How would Jesus handle a conflict that you are currently dealing with?
4. How does God win by doing the opposite of what we expect?
5. How does the above quote fit within the context of the story of Eden?

Prayers for the Week

LITANY FOR THE EASTER SEASON

Father of life, we give you praise and glory.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

You have given Jesus victory over sin.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

You have raised him from the dead.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

You have made his cross a sign of glory.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

You have made us sharers in your life.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

With Christ, you have buried us in death to sin.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

With him you have raised us to new life.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

He is seated with you in glory.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

He sends his Spirit to guide our lives.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

Jesus will come again in glory.

Christ is risen, alleluia!

EASTER PRAYER

Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. The first Christians recognized the signs and wonders of their day. Help me to see your guiding hand each day. Reveal your risen presence to me as you come to me in Holy Communion. Let my heart burn with love for you as you speak to me in the scriptures. Keep alive in me the joy of this season that always and everywhere the Easter alleluia may arise as a hymn of glory to Your name. Amen.

Saint Monica Society Prayer For March



PRAYER TO KNOW THE WAY TO PEACE

Jesus, Lord, don't let the fear of death overpower us. And don't let the loss of our loved ones cause us to doubt Your power to "Easter" everybody. Remind those who have fallen away and us, Lord, that You have the last words over death. You are risen! You are not "among the dead." Neither are we. We shall live forever in Your triumphant love. - Amen.

St. Monica Society

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

Catholic Trivia



Last Week's Answers

1. Baldacchino = C 2. Apse = B
3. Fald Stool = A 4. Rood Screen =D

- A. A portable folding chair the bishop uses during formal liturgical celebration.
- B. Semi-circle part of a sanctuary in traditional Church
- C. Italian word for Baghdad. Now refers to a canopy above the altar or bishop's chair.
- D. Normally a depiction of the Crucifixion located high in the Church.



This Week's Questions

Place the Following Terms in the Right Category.
Category #1 Parts of the Church
Category #2 Marks of the Church
Category #3 Pillars of Church Authority

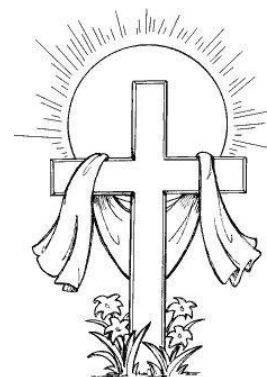
One__ Militant__ Holy__ Catholic__
Tradition__ Magisterium__ Triumphant__
Apostolic__ Suffering__ Sacred Scripture__

Quotes of the Week

. "A man who was completely innocent, offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act." -Mahatma Gandhi

"God loves each of us as if there were only one of us." - St. Augustine

"Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song." - Pope John Paul II



Pro-Life Corner

Pro-Life Prayer for April

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Author of Life, Who died and now lives forevermore.
May we who work and pray That children in the womb may be protected
Always draw strength, confidence, and joy From Your victory over death,
For you are Lord forever and ever.



Catholic Humor

Q. What do you get if you pour hot water down a rabbit hole?

A. Hot cross bunnies!

Q. What do you call a rabbit with fleas?

A. Bugs Bunny!

Q. Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke?

A. It might crack up!

Q. How did the soggy Easter Bunny dry himself?

A. With a hare-dryer!

Q. Why did the Easter Bunny cross the road?

A. Because the chicken had his Easter eggs!

Q. What did the rabbit say to the carrot?

A. It's been nice gnawing you!

Q. How did the Easter Bunny rate the Easter parade?

A. He said it was eggs-cellent!

Q. How does the Easter Bunny travel?

A. By hare-plane!

Q. How does the Easter Bunny stay fit?

A. Eggs-ercise and hare-robics!

Q. Why did the Easter egg hide?

A. He was a little chicken!