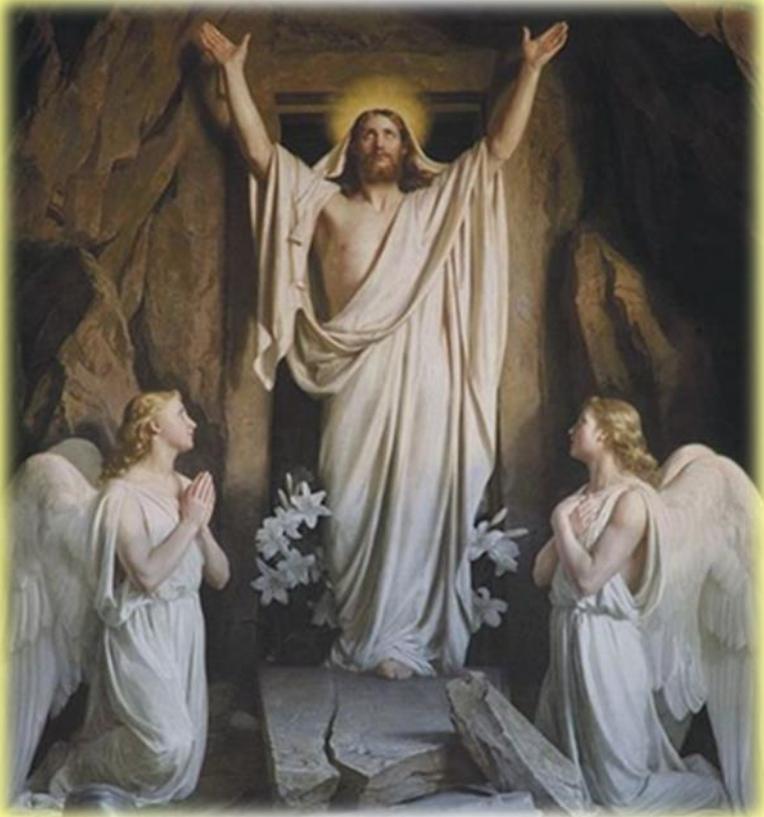


FOCUS

The Parish Magazine
of
St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Wembley



Easter 2021

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

High Road, Wembley, Middlesex - HA9 6AG

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Parish Team: Fr Joseph Kaduthanam CMI, Fr Joseph Chacko CMI
and Fr Tebin Francis CMI

Times of Service during the Covid 19 restrictions

Monday	Mass: 9.30am (Live streaming only)
Tuesday	Mass: 9.30am (Live streaming only) and 6.30pm
Wednesday	Mass: 9.30am (Live streaming only)
Thursday	Mass: 9.30am (Live streaming only) and 6.30pm
Friday	Mass: 12.00noon (Live streaming only)
Saturday	Mass: 9.30am (Live streaming only) 6.30pm Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday	Mass: 9.30am, 11.00am (Live streaming only) and 12.30pm

All services are streamed live on ChurchServices
ChurchServices.tv/wembley1

Schools

ST JOSEPH'S INFANT SCHOOL, Waverley Avenue. Tel: 020 8903 6032

ST JOSEPH'S JUNIOR SCHOOL, Chatsworth Avenue. Tel: 020 8902 3438

Executive Head Teacher: Mrs Mandy Whelan

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A message of hope at Easter



The Resurrection of our Saviour is the defining event of our Christian faith. It is the basis of our eternal hope that the purity of God's love flowing through us will overcome all things.

As we continue to navigate the challenging waters of the global coronavirus pandemic together, its significance and the celebration of Easter Sunday are hugely amplified.

Our Lenten experience this year has also been far from typical. Living out isolation, quarantine, social distancing, and the suspension of public Masses have been unimaginable concepts. Our 40-day journey has been full of sudden, dramatic, and necessary changes in society to provide for public health and safety. As a result, the current reality of our everyday world has left many in despair.

We need to keep our eyes fixed on the outstretched arms of Christ the crucified and Christ the merciful in preparation for the coming of Easter and as Easter arrives, to keep our eyes fixed on the outstretched arms of Christ the Resurrected. He is there waiting to receive us, to hold us, and to pour the love of God the Father upon us. That love is boundless. It is pure. It is invincible. Neither contagion nor death can conquer it.

It has been a painful, confusing, and trying time for us all, but in Christ and His triumph on the Cross, God's great love for us prevails. That love transcends our human understanding and is more powerful than we can comprehend. It will never fail us.

So, on this Easter, let us look to God with renewed hearts and minds. May His love flow through us and inspire us to care for one another with tenderness and mercy. Let us also pray for the sick, suffering, their caregivers, for health professionals, and our elected officials.

The development, by the grace of God, of a number of effective vaccines in the last year, offers great hope and these seemingly ominous days will pass and we shall remain united as a Christian family, as a people of hope. May God bless you and your loved ones abundantly and may the peace and joy of the Resurrection be with you always."

At the dawn of Easter we loudly proclaim, "Jesus is Risen, Alleluia!"

Fr Joseph

Understanding Holy Week



PALM SUNDAY

Palm Sunday is the final Sunday of Lent and the beginning of Holy Week, the most solemn week in the church's calendar. This year Palm Sunday is March 28. Palm Sunday commemorates the triumphant arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem. In the Gospels we are told that Jesus entered Jerusalem riding a young donkey, and was praised by the townspeople who believed he would free them from Rome's power. The customary practice at the time to honour people of great respect would be by laying down garments or throwing olive or palm branches in front of them as they processed. To remember this event, on Palm Sunday, palm branches are distributed to all who attend. The Mass begins with the blessing of the palms and a short gospel reading recounting the events of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Then the ministers walk in a procession into the church, with the parishioners holding their palm branches, symbolizing the people praising Jesus. During the reading of the gospel, all participate as we hear the account of the passion of Jesus. After Mass, the palm branches are taken home and returned the following year prior to Ash Wednesday, so they can be burned to make the ashes that will be given out on that day.

THE SACRED TRIDUUM

Sundown on Holy Thursday to sundown on Easter Sunday is considered the most solemn part of the liturgical year. This three-day period is referred to as the *Easter Triduum* or *Paschal Triduum*.

The Sacred Triduum is one great festival recounting the last three days of Jesus' life on earth, the events of his Passion and Resurrection, when the Lamb of God laid down his life in atonement for our sins. "Though

chronologically three days, they are liturgically one day unfolding for us the unity of Christ's Paschal Mystery" (USCCB).

It is known as the "Paschal Mystery" because it is the ultimate fulfillment of the ancient Jewish Passover (or Pasch), which itself recalls how God brought the Jews out of their slavery in Egypt. The spotless lamb was killed for the Passover meal and consumed, and that night the destroying angel "passed over" the homes marked with the blood of the Passover Lamb, and those covered by the Blood were saved. This was the Old Testament pre-figuring of Jesus' work, where he becomes the Paschal Lamb and is sacrificed on the cross to save us from our sins.



HOLY WEEK

The Paschal Mystery is, therefore, God's plan of redemption for the fallen human race through the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is one marvellous event stretched out over three days.

The three days that make up the Easter Triduum:

HOLY THURSDAY



The evening Mass on Holy Thursday, which this year is April 1, is referred to as *The Mass of the Lord's Supper*. This is where the Church relives the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper, as well as the institution of the priesthood, which took place the evening before Jesus was crucified.

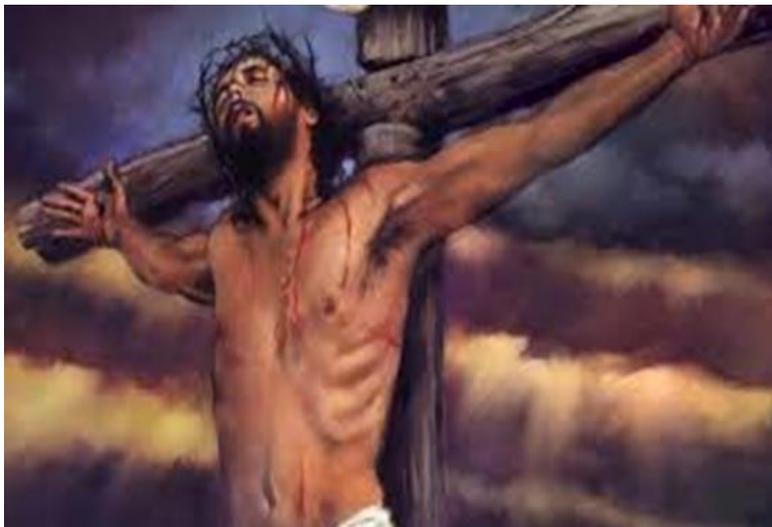
After the homily there is a washing of the feet ceremony, where the priest washes the feet of others to signify his role as servant, just as Jesus did with his disciples. Extra hosts are consecrated at this Mass to be used on Good Friday when no Mass will be celebrated.

The Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday concludes with a procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the "altar of repose," a place where the consecrated host is kept other than the tabernacle, a cabinet near the altar where it is usually kept. Eucharistic Adoration at this altar of repose will follow.

GOOD FRIDAY

This is the day of the crucifixion, the day Jesus died for the sins of the world. The parish altar looks very different on Good Friday, it is plain and bare. There is no holy water in the fonts, the paschal candle is removed and there are no consecrated Hosts in the Tabernacle; it was carried away on Holy Thursday to the "altar of repose" to signify Jesus' death. The candle by the Tabernacle is blown out, and the Tabernacle doors are left open to show that it is empty. This highlights that Good Friday, which this year is April 2, is a solemn day of prayer and fasting. Although Good Friday is the day on which Jesus died, it is called "Good" Friday because it is the day we are saved from our sins.

The ceremony on Good Friday is not a Mass, but rather a communion service using the consecrated



hosts from Holy Thursday. It takes place at 3pm, the hour that Jesus breathed his last on the cross. The priest and ministers will begin the service by prostrating themselves in front of the altar. Veneration of the Cross also takes

place at this service by either touching or kissing it. There is no formal dismissal at the end of the service and all leave in silence.

HOLY SATURDAY

On this day, which this year is April 3, Christ is in the tomb. There is no daytime Mass on Holy Saturday. It is still a day of sorrow, the final one before the Easter Vigil begins that evening. We remember, with Mary and the disciples, that Jesus died and was separated from them for the first time as he lay in the tomb.

Jesus descended to the realm of the dead on Holy Saturday to save the righteous souls, such as the Old Testament patriarchs, who died before his crucifixion.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls Jesus' descent into the realm of the dead "the last phase of Jesus' messianic mission," during which he "opened heaven's gates for the just who had gone before him." Before the first Holy Saturday, there were no souls enjoying the beatific vision of God in heaven!

EASTER VIGIL

The Easter Vigil is held after nightfall on Holy Saturday, in celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. It is the most glorious, beautiful, and dramatic liturgy for the Church. The vigil is divided into four parts: 1) the service of light, 2) the liturgy of the Word, with five readings recalling salvation history, 3) the liturgy of Baptism and Confirmation of those being baptized, and 4) the liturgy of the Eucharist. The Vigil begins in complete darkness until a fire is lit, recalling God's creation, bringing light from darkness: "Let there be light." From this fire the new paschal candle is lit and then the candles of all at Mass are lit, bathing the once dark church in light. The Alleluia, that has been absent throughout Lent, resumes with this celebration. The Vigil, all Masses on Easter Sunday and throughout the octave of Easter, ends with the priest or deacon announcing to all, go in peace, alleluia, alleluia, signifying the joyous celebration of Christ's resurrection.

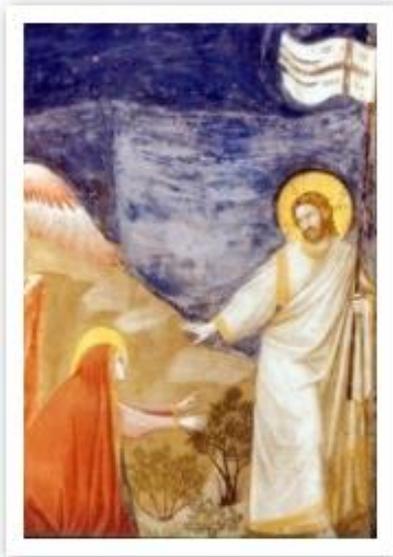
HOLY WEEK PRAYER

LORD GOD, HEAVENLY FATHER,
IN YOUR FATHERLY GRACE YOU DID NOT SPARE YOUR ONLY SON
BUT GAVE HIM UP TO DEATH ON THE CROSS.
POUR YOUR HOLY SPIRIT INTO OUR HEARTS
THAT WE MAY FIND OUR HIGHEST COMFORT IN YOUR GRACE.
PROTECT US FROM TEMPTATIONS TO SIN,
AND HELP US PATIENTLY BEAR WHATEVER HARDSHIPS MAY COME,
SO THAT THROUGH HIM WE MAY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

The Joy of Easter

by FR. LEONARD M. PUECH

Some of the men went to verify. Well, the tomb was empty all right, but they didn't see him. It's all over! And then the explosion of joy, when they recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread.



Speaking to the apostles after the Last Supper, just before going to his agony in the garden, Jesus foretold, "You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. You have sorrow now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you." (*Jo. 16,20-22*).

We can easily imagine that sorrow of the apostles when they saw their master, whom they admired and loved, sincerely, put to a cruel death as a vulgar criminal.

All their cherished dreams of a restoration of the kingdom of Israel, of which they would be heroes, were dashed to pieces. They were afraid for their own lives and stayed inside, behind locked doors, for fear of the Jews (*Jo.*

20,19).

Saint Luke has left us a description of the feelings of two of the disciples (*Lk. 24,13-24*). All their hopes shattered, they were going back home to Emmaus, sadly discussing the death of Jesus.

To the stranger who has joined them, they explain: "Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people. Our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be sentenced to death and crucified him. We were hoping that it was he who should redeem Israel."

They were hoping; they hope no more; it's already the third day since he died. Oh! yes, some women went to the tomb, before daylight, and found it empty. They said they had seen angels who said he was alive — but you know women!

Some of the men went to verify. Well, the tomb was empty all right, but they didn't see him. It's all over!

And then the explosion of joy, when they recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

They must return right away and tell the others in Jerusalem. Do you see them running in their haste to bring the good news? And they find the disciples excited: "the Lord has risen indeed and has appeared to Simon" (*Lk. 24,34*).

To add to the excitement and the joy, behold, while they are talking about these apparitions, Jesus stands among them.

At first they are panic-stricken; they think it's a ghost. All kinds of ideas come to their mind. Jesus reassures them, shows them the wounds of his hands and feet (*Lk. 24,39*), of his side (*Jo. 20,20*); invites them to see and to touch: "A spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have" (*Lk. 24,39*).

It is too good to be true; their surprise and their joy are so great, that their mind cannot grasp the fact. To convince them that everything is very real, Jesus asks them: "Have you something here to eat?" and he eats in their presence and gives them what remains.

After receiving his instructions and the power to forgive sins, the disciples remained alone. It is doubtful whether they were able to sleep that night!

One can imagine Peter and John telling how they ran to the tomb, when Mary Magdalene told them it was empty. They had found it empty in fact, with the shroud lying on the shelf undisturbed, and the handkerchief rolled, as it had been tied around the head of Jesus.

Did they pick them up, or did Joseph of Arimathea, the owner of the tomb?

Then Peter would tell again how he had seen the Lord. They surely had heard about the apparition of Jesus to Mary Magdalen and how she had at first mistaken him for the gardener, and also about the message he had entrusted to her (*Jo. 20,11-18*). And the two disciples from Emmaus would repeat all that Jesus had explained to them and how he had interpreted the Scriptures, showing how they referred to him (*Lk. 24,27*).

James also, the "brother" of the Lord, to whom Jesus had appeared (*I Cor. 15,8*) — according to one of the apocryphal gospels on the very day of the resurrection — would be there telling how he could never believe in Jesus (*Jo. 7,5*) and even thought he was mad (*Mk. 3,21*) and how by his death he had brought such shame on all the family. Now all his incredulity had been swept away and replaced by a wonderful joy.

When you have seen the joy of a convert who has just found the faith — especially if it was after a long night of doubts — you can imagine something of the apostles' joy on that first Easter day.

They were just coming out of the total darkness, which had filled their souls for two long days and nights, into such a wonderful light.

True, Jesus had upbraided them for their lack of faith, for not believing those who had seen him after he was risen (*Mk. 16,14*), but this was blotted out by the joy of seeing him again and hearing his voice.

Their faith was still very impure: they will still be asking about the restoration of Israel (*Acts 1, 6*); but they are not thinking about it today. Their joy is pure joy; they cannot think about anything else but that "the Lord is risen indeed."

This joy nobody would be able to take away from them; it would remain with them forever, for nothing now would be able to shake their faith in the resurrection of Jesus. They would be able to say with Saint John: "What we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked upon and our hands have handled... we announce to you" (*I Jo. 1,1-3*).

At Easter we share in the joy of the apostles: the resurrection of Jesus is the pledge of our own.

The Fascinating History of Easter and How All of Our Favourite Holiday Traditions Came to Be

Easter Eggs



From coloured eggs to chocolate eggs to egg hunts, nothing says "Easter" like the incredible edible. Yet our modern take on collecting, dyeing, and decorating eggs comes from a tradition dating back thousands of years, long before the time of Jesus Christ.

Many ancient cultures, including the Greeks and Egyptians, saw eggs as a sign of fertility and new life; they used eggs in

religious rituals and hung them in pagan temples for mystical purposes, says Martha Zimmerman in her book, *Celebrating the Christian Year*.

Later, as Christian missionaries observed community members hunting for eggs in spring, they began using the food as a tool to describe Christ's new birth in resurrection. "They would dye the eggs based on what colours meant to the church: yellow for resurrection, blue for love, red for the blood of Christ. Or, they would paint various scenes from the Bible on eggs and hide them; the child who found the egg would come back and tell the story painted on that egg," says Collins.

Easter Sunday Sunrise Service

There's a reason why Easter Sunday is often celebrated with a church service at the crack of dawn. As the story goes, it was at early at dawn on Easter morning that Mary opened Jesus's tomb to find it empty — which is why so many churches now hold services at an early hour to honour the momentous occasion.

In fact, the tradition of sunrise Easter service dates back to 1732, when the first service was held in Germany by the Moravian Church. A group of young men gathered at the first light of dawn at the town's graveyard to sing hymns of praise — and the next year, the entire congregation joined in. By 1773, the first sunrise service for Easter was held in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Lent

We can thank Lent for our big Easter feasts. Originally, Lent required people to fast for 40 days (excluding Sundays), but these days it's more commonly observed by having people give up an indulgence, like caffeine, chocolate, television, or social media.

The exact end date for Lent can vary slightly depending on whether the church is following Western or Eastern practices, but it tends to end near Easter. So come Easter Sunday, people are definitely ready to dig into some of the sweet and savory dishes they've been missing.

Stations of the Cross and Passion Plays



As early as the 14th century, the Catholic Church discovered drama and ritual as effective methods for teaching the gospel to those who couldn't read, write, or speak the traditional Latin used in church.

The Church developed practices, such as the Stations of the Cross and the Passion Play, to tell the story of Jesus Christ's crucifixion and resurrection in accessible and compelling ways.

According to the Catholic News Service, the Stations of the Cross originally described a physical pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where participants would travel to 14 sacred sites related to Jesus' death and crucifixion, reciting prayers and singing songs. Eventually, Catholic Americans developed a spiritual practice of replicating the pilgrimage in their local churches, reciting the same prayers and songs.

The Passion Play, a dramatic presentation of Christ's trial, sufferings and death, became popular in the Catholic Church in the 15th century. One of the most famous in Oberammergau, Germany, started in the early 1600s, when the town vowed to perform a Passion Play every decade if God would spare the town from the plague. The death rate dropped dramatically after the play was held in the town cemetery, and the play has been performed in Oberammergau to sold-out crowds ever since.

Hot Cross Buns

These Easter-famous breads trace back to ancient Egypt, Rome, and Greece, where they served as symbols of honor toward their goddesses, according to the Oxford Companion to Food. Later, these sweet breads became popular at Easter, especially in England where bakers were forbidden to sell spice breads except on special holidays, like the Friday before Easter.

Many English believed hot cross buns baked on Good Friday would never grow moldy; they were kept as good luck charms hanging in windows, accompanied sailors on a voyage, or buried in piles of grain to ward off rodents. Today, they're mostly representations of the Christian symbol of the cross, as well as a sweet, buttery addition to an elegant Easter meal.





The Tomb Is Empty!



Jesus' body was hastily placed in a tomb on Friday afternoon. There was no time to properly prepare the body for burial with spices and ointments according to Jewish customs. No work could be done on the Sabbath, so that task had to wait until Sunday.

Early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and several other women went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. When they arrived, they found the tomb

had been opened already. When they went in, they did not find Jesus' body, and they wondered what had happened.

Suddenly, two angels in dazzling white clothes were there. The women were terrified, but the angels said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you that He would be turned over to sinful men, be crucified, and rise again on the third day!"

The women ran back to tell Jesus' apostles what they had seen. Peter and one other apostle went to the tomb to see for themselves. They looked in and saw the linen cloths that Jesus' body had been wrapped in but nothing else. Then they went home, amazed and confused.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

When Peter and the other apostle went home, Mary Magdalene stayed outside the tomb crying. Suddenly she saw Jesus standing there, but she did not recognize Him at first. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" Mary thought He must be the gardener and said, "Sir, if you have taken Him away, tell me where, and I will take Him!" Jesus said, "**Mary!**" Then she recognized Him and exclaimed, "Master!"



Jesus said, "**Don't hold on to me, because I have not yet returned to the Father. But go to my disciples and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'**" Then Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord!", and she told them everything that had happened.

Jesus Talks with Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

Later that same Sunday, two of Jesus' disciples, Cleopas and another man, were walking along the road to a village called Emmaus, which was about seven miles (11 km) from Jerusalem. All day they had been talking and wondering about all the things that had happened. Suddenly, Jesus was there with them, but they did not recognize Him. "What are you talking about as you walk along?" He asked. The two disciples looked sad. Cleopas asked, "Are you the only one in Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened there in the last few days?" **"What things?"** Jesus asked.



"The things about Jesus of Nazareth,

who was a great prophet before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed Him over to be crucified. We had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides, it is now the third day since all of this happened. And now, some women of our group amazed us. They went to His tomb early this morning, but they did not find His body there. They came back and told us that they had seen angels there who said He was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women said, but they did not see Jesus." Then Jesus said to them, **"Oh you are so foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Wasn't it necessary for Christ to suffer those things and enter into His glory?"**

As they came near the village of Emmaus, the two disciples said to Jesus, "Stay with us, because it is late and the day is now nearly over." So Jesus went in to stay with them. As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them. Suddenly they recognized Him as Jesus, and He vanished from their sight.

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

Jesus remained on earth for 40 days after He was resurrected from the dead on that Sunday morning (Acts 1:3). He appeared again to the apostles at the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee) and on a mountainside in Galilee. He also appeared to more than 500 others (1 Corinthians 15:6).

Jesus' parting words to His disciples were, **All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.** (NRSV, Matthew 28:18-20)

When it was time for Jesus to return to heaven, He led His disciples out to a place near Bethany, a village on the slopes of the Mount of Olives about 2 miles (3 km) from Jerusalem. Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed them. Then He ascended to heaven, and the disciples lost sight of Him in a cloud.



Easter Bible Quiz

1. When Jesus died, which of the following things did NOT happen?

- A. the dead came to life
- B. there was an earthquake
- C. there was a flood that covered the earth
- D. the veil of the temple was torn

Matthew 27:51-53

2. Who asked Pilate for Jesus' corpse and put it in his own tomb?

- A. Paul
- B. Joseph of Arimathea
- C. Zebedee
- D. Mary Magdalene

Matthew 27:57-58

3. What was placed in front of the door of the tomb to close it?

- A. a stone
- B. a wall
- C. a fence
- D. a blanket

Matthew 27:60

4. On what day was Jesus' resurrection?

- A. the fourteenth day
- B. the same day as his crucifixion
- C. the tenth day
- D. the third day

Matthew 27:63

5. What moved the object in front of the tomb door?

- A. the earthquake
- B. the 12 Apostles
- C. the object moved itself
- D. an angel

Matthew 28:2

6. Who did not see the empty tomb?

- A. John the Beloved
- B. Joseph
- C. Peter
- D. Mary Magdalene

John 20:1-3

7. What was found in the tomb?

- A. a growing lily
- B. a vase full of water
- C. a sparrow
- D. Jesus' burial clothes

John 20:6-7

8. Who did Mary Magdalene think Jesus was when she first saw Him after He had risen?

- A. one of the Twelve Apostles
- B. the gardener
- C. a shepherd
- D. Pontius Pilate

John 20:15

9. Which of these things did Jesus NOT say to Mary?

- A. "Blessed art thou among women"
- B. "Mary"
- C. "Go to my brethren"
- D. "Touch me not"

John 20:16-17

10. Which of the Twelve Apostles did not believe that Jesus was risen?

- A. John the Beloved
- B. Andrew
- C. Thomas
- D. Simon Peter

John 20:24

....Answers on page 18



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Why is Pentecost so important to Catholics



Pentecost which begins the eighth Sunday, or 50 days, after Easter Sunday. is the liturgical season after

Easter. It celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Church. The descent of the Holy Spirit ushered in a new era for the people of God.

The Jewish History of Pentecost

“Pentecost” is from Greek meaning “fiftieth.” The name Pentecost was originally given to the Jewish Feast of Weeks which fell on the fiftieth day after Passover. On this day, the first fruits of the grain harvest were offered to the Lord (Leviticus 23:15-21 and Deuteronomy 16:9-11). The second chapter of Acts begins by noting that the Feast of Weeks had just passed.

The Day of Pentecost in Acts

In Acts 2:1-41 the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. This occurred ten days after Jesus’ Ascension. Jesus had asked his Apostles to pray, and their nine days of prayer can be considered as the first novena.

Let’s look at the biblical account of Pentecost in detail.

Miracles the Apostles Experienced

When the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles, they preached the Good News of Jesus Christ. Miraculously, people of many different languages and nations could understand the Apostles in their own languages. This miracle reflected God’s desire for the Gospel to be preached to all, and for all the peoples of the earth to be united in faith. The Collect (opening prayer) of the Pentecost Mass prays:

Almighty ever-living God, who willed the Paschal Mystery to be encompassed as a sign in fifty days, grant that from out of the scattered nations the confusion of many tongues may be gathered by heavenly grace into one great confession of your name.

Another wonder surrounding Pentecost was that tongues of fire appeared and rested on the Apostles. God left no doubt that Pentecost was an important event in the history of the Church and that the Holy Spirit was truly present.

The Most Important Effect of Pentecost

The miraculous tongues of fire, along with the Apostles’ ability to speak in different languages, may seem to be the most impressive signs of Pentecost. However, the most important and most lasting effect of Pentecost went deeper than that.

Peter, the leader of the Apostles, stood in front of the crowds and preached. He preached with boldness and conviction. Consider that up until this point the Apostles had not preached at all. Just 10 days before, the Apostles still thought that Jesus’ mission was to restore an earthly kingdom to Israel (cf. Acts 1:6). Now,

however, Peter recognizes the mission of Jesus and boldly preaches instead of remaining hidden in a room.

The boldness that the Holy Spirit gave the Apostles on Pentecost gave them the courage and wisdom to preach to many nations and peoples. This, in turn, resulted in the spread of Christianity and the conversion of thousands of people. On the day of Pentecost, about 3,000 people were baptized (Acts 2:41).

Pentecost: The Birthday of the Church

Pentecost is the birthday of the Church because from that point on the apostles carried the message of Christ to the whole world. The authority that Christ gave his Apostles through the Holy Spirit extends through the bishops today. The Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church. In fact, St. Augustine said that the Holy Spirit was the soul of the Church. Just as the soul gives life to the body, so also the Spirit gives life to the Church.

The Spirit Continues to Make Christ Present

Pentecost ushered in a new age of the Church through which Christ works in different means for our salvation.

In this age of the Church Christ now lives and acts in and with his Church, in a new way appropriate to the new age. He acts through the sacraments [...]; this is the communication of the fruits of Christ's Paschal mystery in the celebration of the Church's 'sacramental' liturgy.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 1076.

In other words, although since his Ascension Jesus is no longer physically present on earth, Jesus has not left us alone. Indeed, he is still present to us in other ways. Jesus has left us [the sacraments](#) through which the Holy Spirit conveys the grace of God in a physical and tangible way. Pentecost marks the beginning of this new, sacramental era in which we live today. It does so because the ministers of the sacraments (usually priests and deacons) have the power to perform the sacraments because the Holy Spirit acts through them. The Holy Spirit conforms the minister to Christ.

Pentecost Liturgy in the Roman Catholic Church

Today, we usually baptize catechumens at the Easter Vigil (the Mass the night before Easter). In the early Church, Pentecost was another popular day for baptism. This makes sense, because baptism is a sacrament in which the Holy Spirit fills the baptized person with supernatural life.

The liturgical colour for Pentecost is red. Red can signify martyrdom, but in this instance it represents the Holy Spirit. It does so because of the tongues of fire associated with Pentecost.

One unique thing that happens at Pentecost Mass is the Pentecost Sequence (Veni Sancte Spiritus—"Come Holy Spirit"). This is a prayer to the Holy Spirit that is either sung or said before the Alleluia and the Gospel. The Sequence invites the Holy Spirit to come into our hearts. It includes many descriptions of the Holy Spirit. These descriptions include "You, of comforters the best," "In our labour rest most sweet," as well as many others. The sequence is a beautiful part of Pentecost Mass.

Celebrating Pentecost

Although often overlooked, Pentecost is one of the most important Catholic feasts of the year. As the birthday of the Church, it is truly a day to celebrate!



Just for a Laugh

The last time we changed from daylight saving time, a preacher friend posted, “For those who habitually show up 15 minutes late to church, allow me to remind you that tonight is the night you set your clock back 45 minutes.”

A priest and a pastor are standing by the side of a road holding up a sign that reads “The end is near! Turn around now before it’s too late!”

A passing driver yells, “You guys are nuts!” and speeds past them. From around the curve, they hear screeching tires—then a big splash.

The priest turns to the pastor and says, “Do you think we should just put up a sign that says ‘Bridge Closed’ instead?”

Gandhi walked everywhere, ate very little and often fasted, leaving him thin and with very bad breath. Thus he is often thought of as a super-calloused, fragile mystic plagued with halitosis.

Did you hear about the dyslexic devil worshipper? He sold his soul to Santa.

“Poor Old fool,” thought the well-dressed gentleman as he watched an old man fish in a puddle outside a pub. So he invited the old man inside for a drink. As they sipped their whiskies the gentleman thought he’d humour the old man and asked, “So how many have you caught today?”

The old man replied, “You’re the eighth.”

One Liners

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion!

A rubber band pistol was confiscated in the algebra class. It was a weapon of maths destruction!

When cannibals ate a missionary, they got a taste of religion!

A dog gave birth to puppies near the road. She was cited for littering!

The butcher backed into the meat mincer. He got a little behind in his work!

Answers to Easter Bible Quiz from Page 14

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. there was a flood that covered the earth | 2. Joseph of Arimathaea |
| 3. a stone | 4. the third day |
| 6. Joseph | 5. an angel |
| 7. Jesus' burial clothes | 8. the gardener |
| 9. "Blessed art thou among women" | 10. Thomas |

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CULINARY QUARTER



Simnel cake cupcakes

Ingredients:

- about 450g/1lb marzipan
- 275g/9¾oz caster sugar
- 150ml/5fl oz sunflower oil
- 50g/1¾oz honey
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 75g/2½oz full-fat cream cheese
- 4 medium free-range eggs
- 150g/5½oz currants
- 75g/2½oz raisins
- 200g/7oz plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp mixed spice
- icing sugar, for rolling
- edible gold balls, to decorate



Method

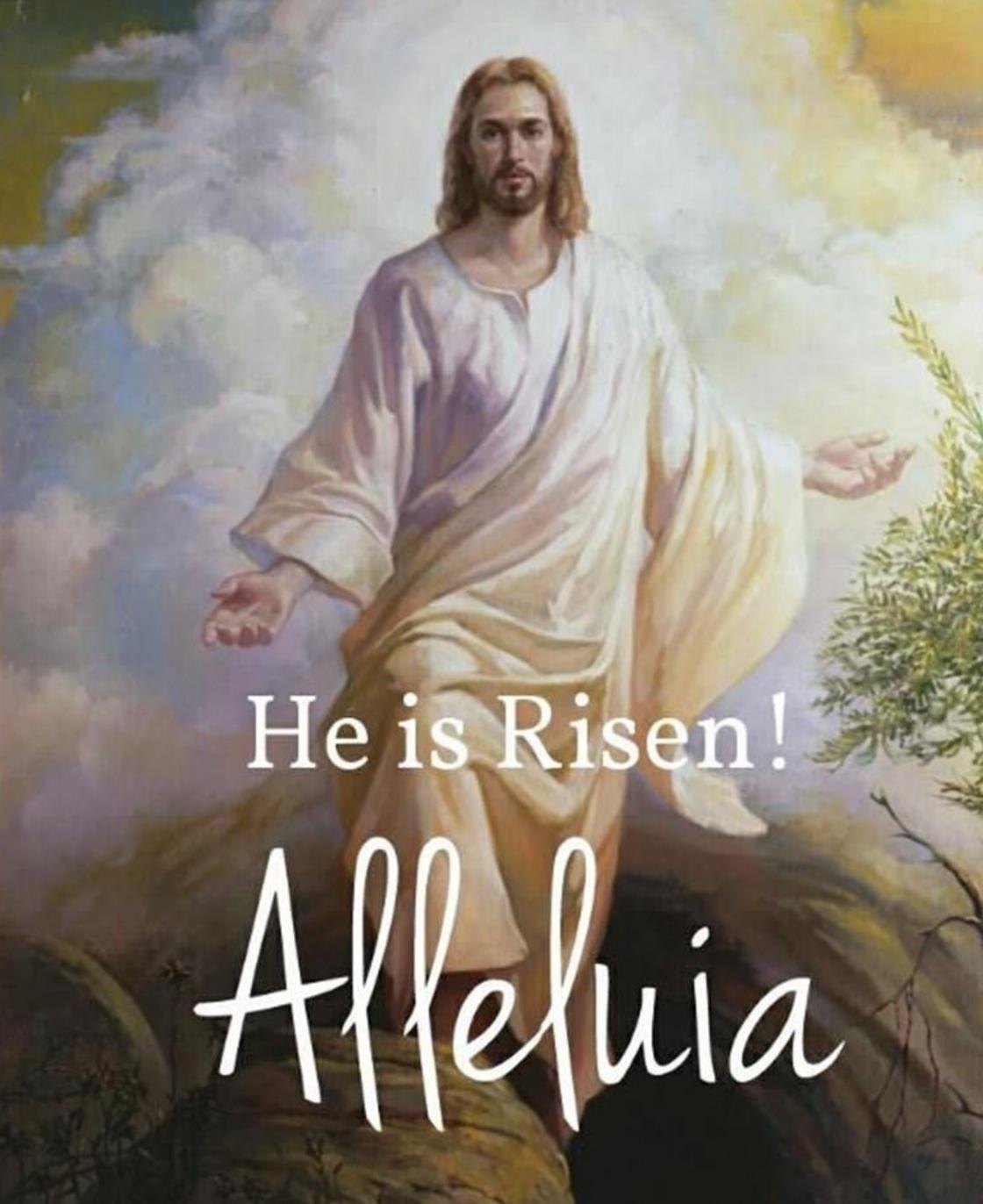
Place 12 paper muffin cases in the pockets of a muffin tray, and preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.

Roll the marzipan out to about 3mm/¼in thick and cut two sets of discs, a dozen of each: one measuring about 5cm/2in in diameter and the other about 6cm/2½in. Stack these on a plate while you make the cake mixture.

Beat the sugar, oil, honey, vanilla and cream cheese in a mixing bowl until smooth, then beat in the eggs until thoroughly mixed through. Stir in the currants and raisins, then sift in the flour, baking powder and mixed spice and stir well.

Spoon about 1-2cm/½-¾in of cake mixture into each paper-lined pocket, lay one of the small marzipan disks on it and press it down gently to remove any air pockets, then spoon more of the mixture on top to three-quarter fill the papers. Bake for about 25-30 minutes, or until a skewer poked in comes out almost clean.

When the cakes are out of the oven, place a disc of marzipan on each and very gently press it down and around: the heat from the cupcake will soften the marzipan and seal it on. Then press eleven gold balls around the edge of the marzipan on each cake and leave to cool.



He is Risen!

Alleluia

May the Risen Lord bring you peace,
happiness and every blessing this Easter and always.

Fr Joseph, Fr Joseph Chacko and Fr Tebin