

From the Rector's Desk...

Easter Makes Perfect Sense...



Easter is perplexing even though our faith teaches us it is true. Every time we say the Nicene Creed at Mass, we declare our belief in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. We get death is the natural conclusion to our life on Earth and makes "sense". It's the resurrection of the dead that is "nonsense" because it defies rational explanation. Or does it?

Our Gospel reading for Easter Morning from John 20.1-10 tells us Mary Magdalene went to Jesus' grave while it was still dark. When she found the grave empty, she ran to find Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved (John) to tell them what she found. She thought the worst thing possible had just happened..."they" stole the body of Jesus. She reached a rational conclusion that made "sense" to her.

Peter and John ran to the graveyard as fast as they could. John was the first to arrive and Peter followed. They saw Jesus' grave was empty...just as Mary Magdalene had told them...and they believed. But what did they believe? They believed what Mary Magdalene had reported to them was factual. The body of Jesus was gone...stolen. They too reached a rational conclusion that made "sense" to them.

The disciples were familiar with the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah, but they hadn't yet fully connected them to Jesus...

...And so I am thankful and glad and feel completely secure, because you protect me from the power of death. I have served you faithfully, and you will not abandon me to the world of the dead. (Psalm 16.9-10)

...The Lord says, "It was my will that he should suffer; his death was a sacrifice to bring forgiveness, and so he will see his descendants; he will have a long life and through him my purpose will succeed. After a life of suffering, he will again have joy; he will know what he did was not in vain. My devoted servant, with whom I am pleased, will bear the punishment of many and for his sake I will forgive them." (Isaiah 53.10-11)

..."Many of those who have already died will live again: some will enjoy eternal life and some will suffer eternal

disgrace. The wise leaders will shine with all the brightness of the sky. And those who have taught what is right will shine like the stars forever." (Daniel 12.2-3)

Nor did they remember Jesus' own words...

... "The Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. He will be put to death, but three days later he will rise to life." (St. Mark 8.31)

In John's Gospel, the Evangelist tells us after he and Peter saw Jesus' body was no longer in his grave they went back to their own homes. The news about Jesus' missing body eventually reached all of the disciples, and the women who had been at the foot of the cross to watch Jesus' die. Their grief over Jesus' death was now compounded by shock and disbelief. How do we make sense out of all this?

We are confronted with the same questions the disciples asked themselves. Jesus made himself known to them and to Mary and the other women in post-Resurrection appearances. Even Thomas had his doubts Jesus had risen from the dead. He demanded proof...empirical evidence...he had to see and touch Jesus before he would believe he has risen from the dead.

We believe in the Resurrection because of the eyewitness testimonies of Mary Magdalene and the disciples and the others who saw Jesus after his Resurrection. They walked with him and talked with him and even had a meal with him. They were happy to see Jesus again and they believed. We believe the Resurrection of Jesus is true!

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews writes...

..."To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see." (Hebrews 11.1)

Our faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit that reinforces our belief in the Resurrection and the hope we will see our own resurrections to eternal life some day. Easter remains a perplexing mystery we cannot fully understand. It is the Divine Reversal of Good Friday. Everything will be made clear to us when we see God face to face. But in a wonderful and mysterious way, the "nonsense" of Easter makes perfect "sense" now. We can now say with all conviction and certainty...

..."Alleluia, the Lord is risen! He is risen, indeed. Alleluia!"

Father Craig Looney+



Easter Even, April 19, 2025

5:00 PM – Blessing & Lighting of the
Paschal Candle, Ante-Communion

Easter Day, April 20, 2025

9:00 AM – Parish Mass & Sermon
Coffee & Fellowship Hour, No Class

April and May Prayer Book Holy Days

Saint Mark the Evangelist, April 28 (*) Book of Common Prayer, Page 237-238

Mark was not one of the original Twelve Apostles. He has traditionally been identified with John Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. The date and location of his birth cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. Some sources state he was born in Jerusalem around 14 A.D. His mother was a wealthy woman who hosted the Jerusalem Church.



He accompanied Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey. A disagreement between Paul and Barnabas over Mark forced him to turn back to Jerusalem. He is identified as the young man who ran away naked when Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. He would have been about 16 years old at the time of the Crucifixion.

According to tradition, Mark later traveled to Alexandria and founded the Church there. He is the Patron Saint of the Coptic Church and North Africa. He was martyred in Alexandria in about 68 A.D.

(*) St. Mark's Day transferred from April 25 this year.

Saint Philip and Saint James, Apostles, May 1 Book of Common Prayer, Page 238-240



Little is known about Philip and James other than what is recorded in the Gospels. They were among the original Twelve Apostles. Philip is mentioned by name in the Synoptic Gospels. John gives us more details and describes him as being "from Bethsaida", Galilee (in modern Israel). John also identifies Philip as the man who introduced

Nathanael (Bartholomew) to Jesus. According to tradition, Philip is thought to have preached in Phrygia (in modern day Turkey) and to have been martyred there.

The James whose feast day we also celebrate this day is called James "the Less", "the Minor", "the Little", or "the Younger". "Less" doesn't refer to his importance, but is to distinguish him from the James "the Great", brother of John and son of Zebedee. Like Philip, little is known about his early life. He may have been a cousin of Jesus. According to 1 Corinthians 15:7, Jesus made a special appearance to James alone after his Resurrection. James and Peter shared leadership in the Jerusalem Church until Peter was forced to leave because of threats made against his life. James is considered to be the first Bishop of Jerusalem and presided over the Council of Jerusalem in 50 A.D. that made it easier for Gentiles to become Christians. According to 4th Century Church historian Eusebius, James was martyred in Jerusalem in 62 A.D.

"Good Shepherd Sunday"

The Gospel for the Second Sunday after Easter is from Our Lord's discourse in John 10:7-18. Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd who watches over his sheep. A good shepherd will do anything to keep his sheep safe, even die for them. A paid worker has no vested interest in the sheep he is supposed to keep safe. He runs off at the first sign of trouble; he can always get a job somewhere else.



The theme of the "Good Shepherd" is found in the Old Testament...

...*"He will take care of his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs together and carry them in his arms; he will gently lead their mothers."* (Isaiah 40.11)

...*"I, the Sovereign Lord, tell you that I myself will look for my sheep and take care of them. In the same way as a shepherd takes care of his sheep that were scattered and are brought together again."* (Ezekiel 34.11-12)

...*"The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need."* (Psalm 23.1)

The New Testament takes up the shepherd imagery and presents Jesus as the "Good Shepherd"...

...*"God raised from death our Lord Jesus, who is the Great Shepherd of the sheep as the result of his sacrificial death, by which the eternal covenant is sealed."* (Hebrews 13.20)

...*"You were like sheep that had lost their way, but now you have been brought back to the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls."* (1 Peter 2.25)

...*"And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you will receive the glorious crown which will never lose its brightness."* (1 Peter 5.4)

In early Christian art (from the catacombs), Jesus is often depicted as a shepherd carrying a lamb upon his shoulders. The Second Sunday after Easter is known as "Good Shepherd Sunday" on account of the Gospel.

Rogation Sunday



The Rogation Days are the three days preceding the Ascension Day. The Fifth Sunday after Easter (May 14 this year) is commonly called Rogation Sunday. The word *rogation* comes from the Latin *rogare*, meaning *to ask*.

The Epistle for this day (James 1.22-27) continues the theme of the previous Sunday Epistle (James 1.17-21) of Hearing God's Word and then putting it into practice. Good works are an essential part of our faith. James calls faith without actions a dead faith. Both parts of the Epistle are read on Thanksgiving Day.

Historically, the Rogation Days were days of fasting and prayer, asking God to bless the spring planting. Our custom at Saint Joseph Parish has been to bless the seeds

planted by Gazelle Creative Learning School and the flowers and plants in our Saint Francis Garden on Rogation Sunday following the Coffee Hour. The fig tree in the photo was donated by the pre-school several years ago to replace the damaged fig tree that had to be removed for safety reasons.

In the Gospel for this day (John 16.23-33) Jesus encourages us to ask the Father for things in his name. "Things" includes material things and spiritual gifts and blessings. The Gospel looks forward to the Ascension Day and the promise Jesus made he will not leave us alone or without help. What we are asking God to do is send his Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us instill in us the peace Jesus tells us we have by being united with him. The Gospel reading concludes with Jesus' powerful and comforting words: "The world will make you suffer. But be brave! I have defeated the world!"

The Ascension of Our Lord **Book of Common Prayer, Page 177-178**

The Ascension Day (May 29 this year) commences the short transitional season from Easter to Pentecost called Ascensiontide.

In earliest times, the Church considered the fifty-day period from Easter to Pentecost as one festival of the Redemption of humankind. It wasn't until the fourth century Easter, the Ascension Day and Pentecost became distinct festivals.



Both the Lesson appointed for the Epistle (Acts 1.1-11) and the Gospel (Luke 24.49-53) talk about the promise Jesus made the Holy Spirit be come down his disciples to strengthen them and make things clear to them. We see in the Lesson from Acts...the Divine Commission...the Apostles will be his witnesses to the world. We are also witnesses to Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit to share the Good News about Jesus to all who will listen.

Ascension Day Mass

Ascension Day Mass will be held at 12:15 PM. Please remember Gazelle School will be in session and to use extra caution entering and exiting the Parking Lot.

Pentecost (Whitsunday)

Book of Common Prayer, Page 180-183



Pentecost is one of the Church's three great festivals. *The Book of Common Prayer* designates the period from the Day of Pentecost until the Eve of Trinity Sunday *Whitsuntide*. This day is commonly called *Whitsunday* in the English Church. The "whit" part of the name refers to the white robes worn by the newly baptized. The weather at this time was more favorable to

administering baptisms than other times of the year, including Easter, when the weather could still be quite cold.

The term Pentecost comes from the Greek *Pentekoste*, meaning "fiftieth". Among Jews, the festival was known as the "Feast of Weeks" and was a thanksgiving for the wheat harvest. It was celebrated fifty days after Passover. In Christ's time, Pentecost also commemorated the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. The name Pentecost was taken over by the Church from Judaism. The festival concludes the fifty-day celebration that began on Easter.

The reading appointed for the Epistle (Acts 2.1-11) records the Coming of the Holy Spirit, who Jesus promised he would send after he returned to heaven. There were many visitors in Jerusalem for the Passover who remained in the city to celebrate Pentecost. The Holy Spirit empowered the Apostles to preach the Good News about Jesus to the visitors in their own languages, languages the Apostles did not speak. This is the miraculous Divine Reversal of the confusion of languages that happened to the Israelites who attempted to build a tower (Tower of Babel) reaching up to heaven as recorded in Genesis 11.1-9.

In the Gospel (John 1.15-30) Jesus tells his disciples about the Coming of the Holy Spirit. In the King James Version, Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the Comforter. Comforter should be understood to mean "Strengtheners" or "Helper". Jesus tells us if we love him we will obey his commandments. When the Holy Spirit enters our lives at our baptism, he will guide us and teach us. He will help us understand the world cannot offer us true peace. Jesus tells us the peace he leaves with us is his own peace, a peace that can never be taken away.

2025 Diocesan Synod

The Diocese of the Holy Trinity will hold its Annual Synod at Saint Matthew's Parish, Newport Beach CA, on Friday, June 20, 2025. The Clericus (Clergy Gathering) and a separate Women's Dinner will take place the previous evening, Thursday June 19. Father Herb and Father Craig will both be attending as clergy delegates. Candyce Francis will be attending as lay delegate. Father Craig will be extending his stay in Orange County over the weekend and will return on Monday, June 23. Father Herb will celebrate and preach on Sunday, June 22.



Our thanks to Father Herb who has been leading our Sunday Discussion Group this Lent. We will be continuing our discussion of the Covenants God made with his people on the First, Second and Third Sundays after Easter (April 27, May 4 and 11).

Carol Schick – Rtequiescat in Pace

Long-time parishioner, Carol Schick, died on March 19, at Mills Estate Villa, Burlingame, where she had been a resident for several years. She was 91 at the time of her death. She was preceded in death by her husband H. Alton "Al" in 2019, and her daughter Susanna in 2020.

Carol was born in Norman OK on August 14, 1933. She was a founding member of Saint Joseph Parish. She sang in the choir for many years and was a regular attendee at Bible Study and the Sunday Discussion Group.

She is survived by her sisters Jane Winslow and Elaine Miller, sons Gary, David and daughter-in-law Andrea, and grandchildren Steven, Nicholas and Claire.

A Requiem Mass for Carol is planned for 3:00 PM on Saturday, May 24, 2025. Committal will take place at Saint John's Cemetery in San Mateo CA.

"May the souls of the Faithful Departed rest in peace. And may light perpetual shine upon them."

THE NEXT ISSUE...

The next issue of *The Parish Times* will be the Early Trinity edition. The target date for publication and distribution is June 13. If you have an article or announcement you wish published, please submit it via e-mail or in writing by June 6. All submissions are subject to space limitations and editing by the Rector. All submissions must be free of partisan politics...whether Church or secular.

Schedule

Sundays – 9:00 AM Parish Mass & Sermon
Coffee Hour and Discussion Group
Weekdays/Holy Days as announced
Sacrament of Penance by Appointment

The Reverend Father Craig Looney, Rector
The Reverend Father Herbert Plimpton, MD, Assisting

THE CONTINUATION OF ANGLICANISM: We affirm that the Church of our fathers, sustained by the most Holy Trinity, lives yet...are determined to continue in the Catholic Faith, Apostolic Order, Orthodox Worship and Evangelical Witness of the traditional Anglican Church.

www.saintjosephparish.net
650 347 4423

SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
ANGLICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
770 NORTH EL CAMINO REAL
SAN MATEO CA 94401

