

Alleluia He Is Risen!



JOHN 19:39-20:7

of Jesus; and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was high at hand.

CHAPTER 20 The Resurrection

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and she found the stone rolled away.

19:39 on hundred pound weight, Nicodemus was also a member of the Council, and he too had debated Jesus with all the scribes and Pharisees. These could not have been seen granted on a sudden impulse, but must have been members of the Council. Nicodemus was a learned man, and he was not a Pharisee, but a Jew who was not a member of the Council.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was high at hand.

1. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she dropped down, and lay on the ground, and she said unto him, Woman, why weepest thou? she said unto him, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

2. And when she had thus said, she turned her back to him, and wept; and as she wept, she saw Jesus standing, and knew not that Jesus was there.

3. And when she saw Jesus standing, and knew not that Jesus was there, she said unto him, Woman, why weepest thou? she said unto him, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

Easter Sunday - April 1, 2018

Masses

Saturday Evening: 5:00 pm
Sunday: 9:00 am, 11:00 am

Daily Mass:
Monday - Friday 9:00 am

Holy Days:
7:00pm (Vigil on the eve)
9:00 (on the day)

Confessions

Saturday: 3:30 - 4:00 pm (Large Church)
or by appointment with a priest

Pastoral Team

Rev. Msgr. William A. Hanson Pastor	frbill@miparish.net
Deacon Robert Lyon	Baptism/ RCIA Coordinator deaconbob@miparish.net
Rev. Charles Okonkwo	Chaplain, in Residence
Fran Bursztyrn	Religious Education Coordinator fran@miparish.net
Mary Pat Lyon	Ministry of Consolation
Leslie O'Connor	Business Manager/Liturgical Music Coordinator leslie@miparish.net
Alfredo Sobalvarro	Parish Maintenance
Karen Stanganelli	Religious Education Secretary karen@miparish.net
Ellen Sullivan	St. Vincent de Paul President ellen92601@aol.com
Tara Turnow	Parish Accountant

Finance Committee

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Dr. Joseph Graskemper	Trustee
Fr. Bill Hanson	
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The Parish Family of Mary Immaculate

Sunday
April 1, 2018

16 Browns Lane, Bellport, NY 11713
631-286-0154 / 631-286-2937 (fax)

www.miparish.net



Rectory Office Hours: Monday - Thursday, 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM
(Closed 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM)

Religious Education Office / Youth Ministry: 631-286-3504

Society of St. Vincent de Paul / Food Pantry: 631-286-3795

Food Pantry Hours: Wednesday, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Friday, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Community and Diocesan Events

- ♦ **Establishing and Maintaining Healthy Boundaries as God Designed Them.** Learn how to bring new health to your relationships and discover how sound boundaries give you the freedom to walk as the loving, giving, fulfilled individual God created you to be. April 13-15. This weekend offers practical tools and encouragement to those seeking a healthy, balanced life. Offering: \$250. For more information call 631-588-8366 or visit their website: [retreat-
www.cenaclesisters.org/ronkonkoma/retreats-and-programs/](http://www.cenaclesisters.org/ronkonkoma/retreats-and-programs/).
- ♦ **Golden Wedding Jubilee Liturgy:** This spring, couples that have been married fifty years or more will be honored at a Mass on Sunday, April 29, 2018, at the Church of St. Rose of Lima in Massapequa. Mass will begin at 2:30 pm. Registration forms and complete instructions can be obtained at the rectory. Registration must be received by the Office of Worship by April 13, 2018. If you have any questions, you may call 516-678-5800, extension 504.
- ♦ **Worldwide Marriage Encounter:** "Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but the LORD looks into the heart." Let our eyes be opened to the love of God in our marriages by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. The next Weekends are Apr 27-29, 2018 in Huntington, NY and Nov 16-18, 2018 in Huntington, NY. For more information, call John & Toni Torio at 877-697-9963 or visit their website at <http://www.wmeli.org>.
- ♦ **The FAMILY SERVICE LEAGUE** in Huntington offers help for many in need, such as school preparedness for toddlers, addition recovery programs, help for the elderly and those with special needs, veterans help and assistance for many in crisis. More information is available at <http://www.fsl-li.org/programs-services/> or call 631.427.3700.

For more information on any diocesan-sponsored events /programs, please visit www.drvc.org.

Local Assistance Information:

- ♦ AA Hotline 24 Hours: 631-669-1124
- ♦ Al-Anon and Alateen: 631-669-2827
- ♦ Birthright: 631-821-9727
- ♦ Catholic Health Services Pregnancy Support: 1-855-301-4CHS; www.chsli.org/giannacenter
- ♦ Child Abuse Hotline: 800-342-3720
- ♦ Epic (NYS Program for Seniors): 1-800-332-3742
- ♦ Family Counseling Service: 631-669-2827
- ♦ Hope House: 631-473-6030
- ♦ Suicide Hotline: 631-751-7500
- ♦ Narcotics Anonymous: 631-689-6262
- ♦ Poison Control: 800-222-1222
- ♦ Shelter the Homeless: 631-854-9100
- ♦ Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence (Shelter): 631-666-8833
- ♦ Suffolk County Office of the Aging: 631-853-8200
- ♦ Suffolk County Handicapped Services: 631-853-8333
- ♦ Suffolk County Veteran Services: 631-853-8387
- ♦ Suffolk Perinatal Coalition: 631-475-5400
- ♦ Suicide Hotline: 631-751-7500
- ♦ Town of Brookhaven Adult Day Programs: 631-451-9142

DIVING MERCY SERVICE

Will be held at

Our Lady of Ostrabrama Church

3000 Depot Lane in Cutchogue

On April 8th at 3:00 pm.

Bishop Barres may be in attendance.



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April 1, 2018 Easter Sunday

MASS INTENTIONS

<u>Saturday</u> 9:00 am 7:00 pm	<u>March 31</u> Morning Prayer and Blessing of the Food Easter Vigil	<u>Wednesday</u> 9:00 am	<u>April 4</u> Joseph Duran by Margaret Duran
<u>Sunday</u> 9:00 am 11:00 am	<u>April 1</u> Elizabeth Gallagher by Father Bill Mary Jane Mahon by Family Elizabeth Gallagher by Father Bill	<u>Thursday</u> 9:00 am	<u>April 5</u> No intention
<u>Monday</u> 9:00 am	<u>April 2</u> Elaine Messina by Al Messina	<u>Friday</u> 9:00 am	<u>April 6</u> Msgr. Bernard Ryan
<u>Tuesday</u> 9:00 am	<u>April 3</u> No Intention	<u>Saturday</u> 5:00 pm	<u>April 7</u> Ted Hollmann by Christine Aulletti

“We have loved them during life, let us not abandon them in death”

When we have a Mass said in memory of a friend or loved one, we follow these words of St. Ambrose and perform one of the Spiritual works of Mercy. To have a Mass said for a friend or relative who has passed, contact the rectory or stop by the weekend office at the kitchen after all Masses.

Bulletin Reflection:

Alleluia! Christ is risen and is victorious over sin and death! We are good stewards of our faith if, like St. Paul, we share this good news whenever and wherever we can.

Living Stewardship:

We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish whose lives reflect the joy of Christ's Resurrection.

Weekly Collection: \$ 7,149

Faith Direct: \$ 2200

This Week's Readings



Monday: Acts 2:14, 22-33; Mt 28:8-15
Tuesday: Acts 2:36-41; Jn 20:11-18
Wednesday: Acts 3:1-10; Lk 24:13-35
Thursday: Acts 3:11-26; Lk 24:35-48
Friday: Acts 4:1-12; Jn 21:1-14
Saturday: Acts 4:13-21; Mk 16:9-15
Sunday: Acts 4:32-35; Jn 20:19-31



For the Month of March

*Our Eucharist & Wine
&*

*Altar Flowers & Candles
are in Loving Memory of*

Jerome Rodier

Requested by the Sullivan Family



Mary Immaculate Welcomes You!



Ongoing Programs/Meetings:

- **Parish Library**
Open weekends after each Mass in Large Church.
- **Children's Liturgy of the Word**
9:00 am and 11:00 am Mass on Sundays. Children are dismissed to break open The Word on a level appropriate for them.
- **Society of St. Vincent de Paul**
10:15 am to 11:15 am on the 1st Sunday of the month in the Cottage.
7:00 pm to 8:00 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month in the Cottage.
- **Rosary Altar Society**
7:00 pm every 2nd Tuesday of the month in the Little Church. All are welcome!
- **Ministry of Consolation**
Please call the Rectory for more information.
- **AA Meeting**
7:30 pm on Sundays & 7:00 pm Thursdays in Auditorium. This meeting is open to anyone who desires to stop drinking.
- **Respect Life**
6:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month in the Large Church.
- **Icon Painting Class**
10:00 am - 3:00 pm on 2nd Thursday of every month in Auditorium. Please call Jim Fuchs at 631-286-1643.
- **Camera Club**
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of month in the Cottage except for holidays and scheduled field trips.

For more information please call the Rectory:
286-0154.

Welcome!



If you have recently moved into this area, kindly register by stopping by the Rectory or visiting the Church Office after any weekend Mass or by contacting us at 631-286-0154.

SACRAMENTS

Baptism: Celebrated once a month at 1:00 pm in the Little Church. Registration is required. Parents should call the rectory to schedule an appointment with Deacon Bob at least 3 months before the desired date of baptism. A baptism preparation class is also required.

Reconciliation: Confessions are heard on Saturdays at 3:30 - 4:00 pm in the Large Church or by calling the Rectory for an appointment with a priest.

Marriage: Couples should make arrangements at least 6 months in advance by appointment with the pastor. No date for a wedding will be set over the phone. Pre-Cana classes are required.

Adult Sacraments: (RCIA)

Are you an adult who wishes to be prepared for Baptism, Confirmation, and/or Eucharist? RCIA is the Rite of Christian Initiation by which adults become members of the Roman Catholic Church. All those who would like to begin this journey, please contact Deacon Bob at the Rectory.



Fr. Bill Hanson

Happy Easter

It is not unusual to read more and more frequently about the closing of Catholic institutions. McGann-Mercy High School in Riverhead is closing with two local Catholic Schools merging. For years schools and parishes around the U.S. have been merging or closing. Our mainline Protestant neighbors are experiencing the same dynamics. Four Methodist churches on the East End are merging into one larger and more viable church on the North Fork. (The Methodist Church in Southold is now an opera house!)

Theories abound as to why the church is shrinking. There is extensive research on outcomes (The Pew Center for Religion in American Life) and causes (Gallup/Faith).

The anonymous parable reprinted here is a retelling by M. Scott Peck, who wrote "The Road Less Travelled." The parable is "right on the money." If you and I want to keep it all going and growing, let's open and cherish the Rabbi's Gift!

Fr. Bill

the RABBI'S GIFT

*From The Different Drum by Dr. M. Scott Peck **

The story concerns a monastery that had fallen upon hard times. Once a great order, as a result of waves of anti-monastic persecution in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the rise of secularism in the nineteenth, all its branch houses were lost and it had become decimated to the extent that there were only five monks left in the decaying mother house: the abbot and four others, all over seventy in age. Clearly it was a dying order.

In the deep woods surrounding the monastery there was a little hut that a rabbi from a nearby town occasionally used for a hermitage. Through their many years of prayer and contemplation the old monks had become a bit psychic, so they could always sense when the rabbi was in his hermitage. "The rabbi is in the woods, the rabbi is in the woods again" they would whisper to each other. As he agonized over the imminent death of his order, it occurred to the abbot at one such time to visit the hermitage and ask the rabbi if by some possible chance he could offer any advice that might save the monastery.

The rabbi welcomed the abbot at his hut. But when the abbot explained the purpose of his visit, the rabbi could only commiserate with him. "I know how it is," he exclaimed. "The spirit has gone out of the people. It is the same in my town. Almost no one comes to the synagogue anymore." So the old abbot and the old rabbi wept together. Then they read parts of the Torah and quietly spoke of deep things. The time came when the abbot had to leave. They embraced each other. "It has been a wonderful thing that we should meet after all these years," the abbot said, "but I have still failed in my purpose for coming here. Is there nothing you can tell me, no piece of advice you can give me that would help me save my dying order?"

"No, I am sorry," the rabbi responded. "I have no advice to give. The only thing I can tell you is that the Messiah is one of you." When the abbot returned to the monastery his fellow monks gathered around him to ask, "Well what did the rabbi say?" "He couldn't help," the abbot answered. "We just wept and read the Torah together. The only thing he did say, just as I was leaving --it was something cryptic-- was that the Messiah is one of us. I don't know what he meant."

In the days and weeks and months that followed, the old monks pondered this and wondered whether there was any possible significance to the rabbi's words. The Messiah is one of us? Could he possibly have meant one of us monks here at the monastery? If that's the case, which one? Do you suppose he meant the abbot? Yes, if he meant anyone, he probably meant Father Abbot. He has been our leader for more than a generation. On the other hand, he might have meant Brother Thomas. Certainly Brother Thomas is a holy man. Everyone knows that Thomas is a man of light. Certainly he could not have meant Brother Elred! Elred gets crotchety at times. But come to think of it, even though he is a thorn in people's sides, when you look back on it, Elred is virtually always right. Often very right. Maybe the rabbi did mean Brother Elred. But surely not Brother Phillip. Phillip is so passive, a real nobody. But then, almost mysteriously, he has a gift for somehow always being there when you need him. He just magically appears by your side. Maybe Phillip is the Messiah. Of course the rabbi didn't mean me. He couldn't possibly have meant me. I'm just an ordinary person. Yet supposing he did? Suppose I am the Messiah? O God, not me. I couldn't be that much for You, could I?

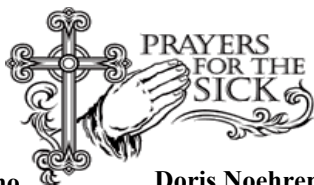
As they contemplated in this manner, the old monks began to treat each other with extraordinary respect on the off chance that one among them might be the Messiah. And on the off chance that each monk himself might be the Messiah, they began to treat themselves with extraordinary respect.

Because the forest in which it was situated was beautiful, it so happened that people still occasionally came to visit the monastery to picnic on its tiny lawn, to wander along some of its paths, even now and then to go into the dilapidated chapel to meditate. As they did so, without even being conscious of it, they sensed the aura of extraordinary respect that now began to surround the five old monks and seemed to radiate out from them and permeate the atmosphere of the place. There was something strangely attractive, even compelling, about it. Hardly knowing why, they began to come back to the monastery more frequently to picnic, to play, to pray. They began to bring their friends to show them this special place. And their friends brought their friends.

Then it happened that some of the younger men who came to visit the monastery started to talk more and more with the old monks. After a while one asked if he could join them. Then another. And another. So within a few years the monastery had once again become a thriving order and, thanks to the rabbi's gift, a vibrant center of light and spirituality in the realm.

** The Different Drum was written by Scott Peck. He did not write this parable. The author is unknown.*

Mary Immaculate Prays For One Another



Gina DiMartino
Kate Cox
Michael Matthews
Roz Hassell
Nancy Cavaliere
Jose Llanes
Claudia Horst
Philip J. McSweeney
Frank C. Harris
Joanne Klonoski
Vincent Racaniello
Jennifer Lombardi
Dana Hertzovitz
Linda Sherwood
Christine Barden
Mary Kinsley

Doris Noehren
Emily Magnani
Lorraine Schordine
Richard Colli
Luhur Budiarto
Teimor Tamadon
Theresa Venturino
Maureen Gjertsen
James Leung
Thomas Nolan
Alice Nolan
John Rocco
Kevin Williams
Therese Hopper
Helen May
Irene Ball
S. Richard Materia

Please Pray for Our Deceased



Charles Meinhold
Des Burke
Charles Burton
Marguerite M. Rauh
Clark J. Champney
Colleen A. Nicols
Mary Jane Mahon
Rebecca Roberts
Mary Louise Vitale

PRAY FOR OUR ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ MILITARY

Gregory Azzara - Navy
Gunnery Sgt. John Scott Dowdell - USMC
SSgt Matthew Pica - Army
John Paul Redmond - Army
PFC Robert Temple - Army
SSgt. Shawn Weismiller - Air Force
Sgt. Jason Ramos - Army
Pvt Jonathan Salvestrini - Army
PFC Shane Gibney - USMC
Cpl Mark Anthony Barone - USMC
Lt. Philip J. Granati - U.S. Coast Guard
WO1 Nalita Sellers - Army
LC Amanda Knepper - USMC
SFC Edward Kusa - Navy
Bryan Thurston - Army
Sean Thomas Vignato - USMC
Mgr. David Matthew Butler - Army
Chief Richard J. Vanderhoof - U.S. Coast Guard
Thomas C. Lennon - USMC

Please pray for the safe return of our troops.
The families wish to thank you for your prayers,
and ask that you please continue to pray.

God Bless you all.

Pray the Rosary

Rediscover prayer by picking up your rosary

Join us in praying the rosary together

8:30 am Monday -Friday in the Little Church

To our Eucharistic Ministers,
the Lectors, Ushers, Altar Servers,
Choir Members, and those
who serve in the Children's Liturgy
of the Word service,
We thank you for your service to
your parish family. You give
your energy, skills, and time to
serve at the Table of the Lord.

Your tireless devotion to this
congregation is such a blessing
to us all.

Clambake



SAVE THE DATE

FOR THE 2018 CLAMBAKE!!

The food & fun will be on
Saturday, July 21st

SAVE THE DATE APRIL 9TH GIRLS NIGHT OUT PORTERS ON THE LANE

6:00 PM — \$35 PER PERSON

Includes Caesar Salad, choice of tilapia almondine, penne a la Vodka, French cut chicken, or braised BBQ short ribs.

Tea and coffee with a homemade cream puff, or ice cream with fudge sauce.

RSVP BY APRIL 1ST

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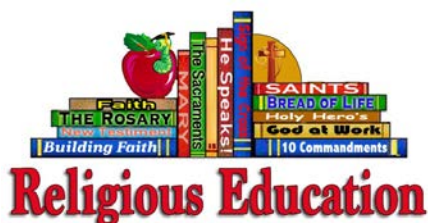
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HOPE YOU CAN JOIN US FOR A DELICIOUS DINNER AND A FUN EVENING.



CHRIST THE LORD
IS RISEN TODAY!

Mary Immaculate Religious Ed. News



There are no classes this week.

Classes resume on
Monday, April 9th

HAPPY EASTER

**REGISTRATION FOR
FAITH FORMATION
WILL BEGIN
APRIL 22**

ATTENTION PARENTS and GUARDIANS

Each year, every child enrolled in a Religious Education program in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, grades 1 - 6, will receive safety training by the use of the Child Lures Prevention Program 'Think First & Stay Safe'. Parents and guardians will be given a Child Lures Prevention Handbook for the purpose of reviewing the topics that are taught to your child in an age appropriate way.



Hello Parents,
Please note the following parent meetings and events:

Level 1 Parent/Child Gathering: April 7 at 1:30 pm
until 2:30 pm

Level 2 Grade Liturgy: April 7 at 5 pm or
April 8 at 9 am or 11 am

Level 8 Grade Liturgy: April 14 at 5 pm or
April 15 at 9 am or 11 am



Faith-Filled
Families

Hi Kids of All Ages!

Believe it or not,
Vacation Bible School will be here
before you know it!

VBS begins
Monday, June 25th and ends
Friday, June 29th
10 am to 2 pm.

**REGISTRATION FOR VBS BEGINS
THE WEEKEND OF APRIL 21st**

Society of St. Vincent de Paul



Tax Statements from SVDP for 2018

Anyone needing a 2018 Tax Statement for their SVDP donations, please contact Jim Renehan, SVDP treasurer, at 770-597-2942 (cell).



Today as we celebrate the feast of Easter, we find the challenge of also seeing and believing the resurrection that comes through our own lives of self-sacrifice which brings new life to others.

Your gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul will show the love of the Risen Christ by bringing your love to those who live in fear and doubt, loneliness and dread.



Thank you for your generosity during our 40 cans of Lent campaign



We accept food year round!

You may drop the cans off on Saturday or Sunday before Mass in our blue wagon located in the foyer of the Large Church.

Our food pantry is always in need of spaghetti sauce, pasta, soup, macaroni and cheese, canned yellow vegetables, peanut butter, jelly, and tuna.

IN THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

Your donations to St. Vincent de Paul made it possible for us to provide help to many in need.

Children served: 154
Adults served: 228
Seniors served: 3
Bags distributed: 181
(45 bags per week)

Thank you for your continued support!



Impact

Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.

WE HAVE ALL BEEN THERE

Confused. Angry. Fearful. Grief-stricken. Disappointed. Hopeless.

We know the fatigue, emptiness, and darkness that accompanies moments of extreme turmoil. The women who came to Jesus' tomb were likely filled with all of these emotions, and more.

They had found love in Jesus' eyes, acceptance, and value. They had believed that he was the long-awaited Messiah, and when they were with him, they found themselves imagining, "what if?" *What if* Jesus was sent by God to bring justice and freedom from oppression? *What if* the healings, feedings, and teaching were only a glimpse of the reign of God? *What if* all they experienced in Jesus' presence could be known and spread throughout the world? *What if* they were to be part of making it so?

It was only a few short days ago that all of their dreams still seemed possible. And then, Jesus was

arrested, mocked, scourged, and brutally murdered. And their dreams died on the cross with him. Still, in their grief and fear, they came to the tomb, to anoint the body of the one they hoped was the Anointed of God.

Incredibly, suddenly, everything changed. The tomb was empty. "What if?" became "It is just as he said!" Minds and hearts racing, they rushed to tell the disciples.

From that moment on, we have known that Christ is with us in the midst of our deepest darkness, and that the love of God and power of the risen Lord is greater than all of the difficulties we experience in this earthly life.

NOTHING WILL EVER BE THE SAME

He is risen. The stone has been thrown away. Have you suddenly recognized Christ, when new life, possibilities, and dreams emerge from your darkest times?



Suddenly...the clouds lift and sunlight pours in, brightening your spirit and bringing fresh perspective. Suddenly... a friend calls, a job is offered, medical treatment is finished. Suddenly... the truth of Christ's presence in the Eucharist is known in a flash of insight. Suddenly... your offer of forgiveness is accepted, your visit with an elderly friend is cherished, your service appreciated.

Jesus' resurrection breaks the power of death. "It is the mystery of the thrown-away stone, that ends up being the cornerstone of our existence," Pope Francis said last Easter. Through Christ's passion, death, and resurrection, we are assured that no confusion, fear, or grief is beyond the reach of God's eternal plan of love.

"The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them...[their resources] were distributed to each according to need." (Acts 4:32-36)

In these weeks of the Easter season, we hear the stories of the early believers in the first reading each Sunday, from the Acts of the Apostles. The followers of Jesus Christ, emblazoned by the power of the Holy Spirit, do signs and wonders; new believers are drawn into the fold; and the apostles are not only willing, but take heart in facing persecution in Jesus' name. Each account tells the story of God's grace in action, and of the stewardship of the followers of Jesus. These stories also inspire us, and urge us to continue to commit ourselves as disciples and stewards. A steward is one who recognizes that all we are, have and will be is a gift from God. In fact, our very lives and all that we have been given is grace - a sign of and the very presence of God in our lives. Coming to appreciate that the life and love of the Risen Christ are planted within us helps us to respond as good stewards - as people who care for and nurture the grace of God, so that it will bear fruit that endures. Being stewards in this way is sure to touch the lives of others, just as Christ was "made real" by

the early believers through their actions and words. We are told that "many signs and wonders were done among the people at the hands of the apostles." (Acts 5:12-16) What "signs and wonders" are you capable of, when you allow God to work through you as you give yourself and your resources as a good steward?

IMPACT THIS MONTH

BE ATTENTIVE

Notice the blessings and grace of life, love, gifts, friendship, and meaning in your life.

THANK GOD

Say a prayer of thanksgiving for this grace and blessing.

INVITE GOD

Ask God to guide you as you discern how you might nurture, witness, and share this grace with others.

COMMIT TO ACT

Make a commitment to act on your discernment. Share this with another. Ask him or her to hold you accountable.

*The article at the top of this page was previously published by Our Sunday Visitor, and is used here with permission.

HOPE IN THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

Why do we wear crucifix or hang one on a wall? People sometimes ask why Catholic Christians have a corpus, the body of the crucified Christ, on their cross. Does this deny the resurrection? We wear and honor the symbol of Jesus' death, the cross, not only because he suffered and died there, but because he conquered it. The cross is our Christian sign of hope - hope in our new life in Christ.

In today's world, Christians face challenges, even persecution, for our beliefs and the actions that result from our Christian faith. It is all the more important that today, and for these coming days of the Easter season, we celebrate the resurrection. We celebrate the fact that Jesus triumphed over evil, death, and persecution. That sacrifice saves us from our wayward ways, all the times that we fail to live as God's good and holy people. Christ's sacrifice is the ultimate act of mercy. On the cross, Jesus' "arms were stretched between heaven and earth in an everlasting sign" of God's great love. (Eucharistic prayer for Reconciliation I)

Especially during the Easter season, we celebrate and must live the very truth that Christ died and rose and lives in and through us today, through the power of the Holy Spirit. The resurrection brings with it a great responsibility. We are to be Christ's hands and feet, the ones that were pierced through suffering and sacrifice.

Christ's sacrifice calls us to give of ourselves more than we think we are able.

Christ's resurrection insures us that in doing so, we will find new life in living Christ's mission of love.

What sacrifice are you called to make to carry out Christ's mission?

What will you do with your new life?



Ron Rolheiser Column

Week of April 1, 2018

Putting God on Trial



In both our piety and our agnosticism, we sometimes put God on trial and whenever we do that, it's we who end up being judged. We see that in the Gospel accounts of the trial of Jesus, particularly in John's Gospel.

John's Gospel, as we know, paints a portrait of Jesus from the point of view of his divinity, not his humanity. Thus, in John's Gospel, Jesus has no human weaknesses whatsoever. He's God from the first line to the last line of the Gospel. This is true to the tiniest detail. For instance, in John's Gospel at the feeding of the multitudes, Jesus asks his disciples how many loaves and fishes they have. John notes in brackets: "He already knew". There are no gaps on a divine radar screen.

We see this most clearly in how John writes up the passion and death of Jesus. Unlike the other Gospels, wherein Jesus is shown as afraid and cringing before his bitter fate, in John's Gospel, throughout his entire passion journey, Jesus is unafraid, in complete control, serene, carrying his own cross, and the antithesis of a victim. Instead, throughout the whole account, Jesus is someone who is acting freely, out of love, and has complete power over the situation.

John makes this point very strongly: When they come to arrest him, Jesus stands up and all those who are apprehending him fall to the ground so that, in contrast to the other Gospels, it is not he who is prostrate on the ground but rather it's the Roman soldiers and temple police who are prostrate – and in that prostration symbolically doing him reverence. And the symbolism continues: Jesus is sentenced to death at noon, at the exact hour when the priests began to slaughter the paschal lambs. After his death he is buried with a staggering amount of myrrh and aloes, as only a king would have been accorded, and he is laid in a "virgin" tomb (just as he was born from a virgin womb). John makes it clear that this God we're dealing with.

With this in mind, namely, that Jesus was always divine and in charge, we will be able to understand more clearly what John is trying to teach in his account of Jesus' death. What John focuses on most is the trial of Jesus. The bulk of his passion story is centered on the trial and the main characters in that trial. But his account has this ironic twist: Seemingly Jesus is on trial; but, in actuality, he is only one who isn't on trial. Pilate is on trial, the religious authorities are on trial, the people are on trial, and we, today, reading the story, are on trial. Everyone's on trial, *except* Jesus.

Pilate is on trial on a number of counts: He knows Jesus is innocent but lacks the courage to stand up to the crowd and thus allows the fickle, mindless frenzy of a crowd to have its way. He's judged for his weakness. But he's also on trial for his agnosticism, namely, his belief (however sincere) that he could treat truth and faith as realities that he, himself, could steer clear of, that he could assess these from a neutral, non-committed position, and that these were other peoples' issues, nothing to do with him. But he's judged for this. Nobody can coolly ask: "What is truth?" as if that answer didn't affect him or her. Jesus' trial finds Pontius Pilate and those of us like him, guilty – guilty of agnosticism, a non-involvement, an indifference, that is in the end dishonest. Ironically, Pilate's weakness in not rescuing Jesus ends up making him perhaps the most famous governor and judge forever in history. With his name in the Christian creeds, millions and millions of people pronounce his name every day.

But Pilate isn't alone on trial here; so are the religious authorities of the time. In their very effort to protect God from what they deem irreverence, heterodoxy, and blasphemy, they are also complicit in "killing" God. The judgment made against them at Jesus' trial is the exact judgment that is being made, down to this very day, on a lot of religious and ecclesial authority, that is, its feverous proclivity to protect God often helps crucify God in this world.

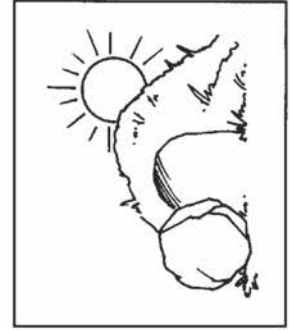
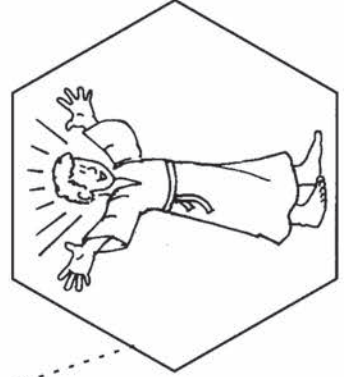
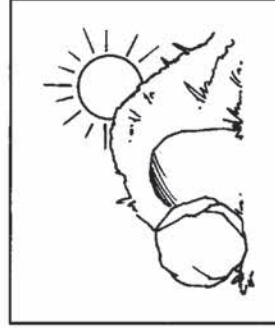
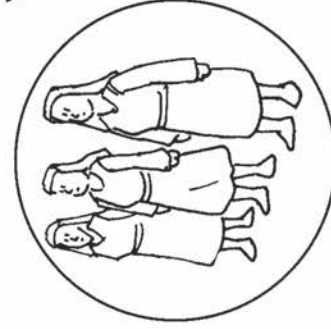
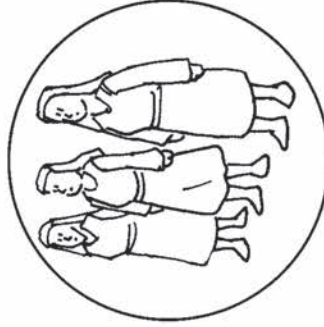
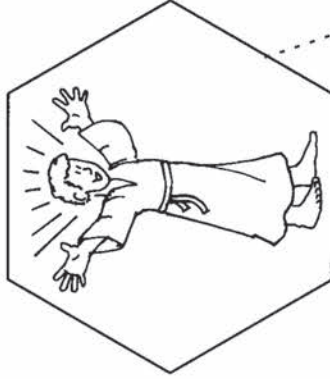
Last, not least, Jesus' contemporaries are also on trial and, with them, so are we. In the heat of the moment, caught up on the mindless, feverous energy of a crowd, they abandon their messianic hope for the slogan of the day: "Crucify him!" How little different from so many of the political and religious slogans we mouth at political and church rallies today. The trial of Jesus is a very harsh judgment on the mindlessness, fickleness, and dangers of crowd energy.

The genius of John's account of Jesus' death is that it shows what happens whenever through our misguided religious fervor or through our cool agnosticism we put God on trial. It's we who end up being judged.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com. □ Now on Facebook www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser

He told them not to be afraid. "You are looking for Jesus. ... He has risen! He is not here. ... Tell His followers that He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him, just as he told you."

Match the shapes.



Children's Worship Bulletin

Ages 3-6

April 1, 2018 • Mark 16:1-8



Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome were on their way to anoint Jesus' body ... just after sunrise. They asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away?"

Circle and count these objects in the picture.



But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.

Write the letter "o" in the stones below. Trace the other letters.



o t n e

r o i l e r

o m a n



As they went into the tomb, they saw a young man ... in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were afraid.

Draw an "X" over the picture that is different.

