

*May the
Word of God
Enlighten our lives*



A V E

APRIL 2023



“Easter is the event that brought radical news for every human being, for history and for the world: the triumph of life over death; it is the feast of reawakening and of rebirth. Let us allow our lives to be conquered and transformed by the Resurrection!” **Pope Francis**

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION

For a culture of peace and non violence

We pray for the spread of peace and non violence, by decreasing the use of weapons by States and citizens.

Alleluia! Christ has risen from the dead!

**LIVE A LIFE
FILLED WITH
HOPE**

Vishal Pinto, SJ

(EDITORIAL)

Easter is here! The greatest feast of our salvation is celebrated this month. Jesus Christ, through His resurrection, has conquered death once and for all. He has risen and lives on in spirit so that all who believe in Him may rise again once their earthly journey comes to an end. The season of Lent, through its call for metanoia, invites every Christian to partake worthily in the Paschal mystery of Christ. The forty days of fasting, prayer and penance prepare us to grow in holiness in order to experience the joy of Easter. A transformed heart that tangibly expresses itself through deeds of love and compassion for the other finds its joy in the realisation that our God lives on and we hope in Him. This sentiment is explicitly expressed in the exhortation of St Augustine: We are Easter people, and Alleluia is our Song! May we spread this joy to the people around us. The second Sunday of Easter is commemorated as Divine Mercy Sunday. Pope John Paul II called this day a time when we are blessed with divine mercy as it reaches us through the heart of Christ crucified. This feast reminds all Catholics to relish the divine love and mercy flowing from the heart of Christ and be united to Him.

This month, the Pope invites us to foster a culture of peace and non-violence and to pray for the spread of peace and non-violence by decreasing the use of weapons by States and citizens. The world, which is breaking apart by hatred and discord, needs more messengers of peace and harmony. May we who experience the risen Christ give peace a chance!

It is satirical that the people are divided in the name of the Prince of Peace. This is supposed to be the pathway to bring reconciliation, harmony and unity among them; instead, there is anarchy amidst the chosen people of YHWH. We see the two contrasting binaries here. In such a conflicting situation, the Prophet Ezekiel admonishes and exhorts the covenantal people of the promise of hope of the Messiah and the salvation of the people. It is this Messianic hope of everlasting covenant between YHWH and the people that will be accomplished in the person of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

01 SAT COVENANTAL PEACE

Ashwin Kujur, SJ

Ez 37: 21-28

Jn 11: 45-57

“What are we to do? This man is performing many signs”.

Jesus shows compassion by restoring the life of a lifeless person. The religious leaders could not believe and digest this compassionate gesture of Jesus. They started plotting to get rid of the Prince of Peace. ‘No good deed goes unpunished.’ The proverb, which is attributed to Walter Winchell and a few others, fits well here. The life giver was unjustly punished by his own created beings. The reception of the covenantal peace was rejected by the chosen people and not by the author of life. God’s response was to save humanity incrementally, nation by nation, people by people, until he could unite all people once again. The Messiah, the prince, preaches the kingdom of justice, and peace, gives life to the dead, heals the sick and above all, forgives the sins.

Pray and Practise: Lord, the Prince of peace, make us compassionate and loving like You. May we always remain covenantal people.

02 SUN (Palm Sunday)
**PASSION,
DEATH AND
RESURRECTION**

Sanjay Bodra, SJ

Is 50:4-7

Phi 2:6-11

Mt 26: 14-27: 66

“..... take, eat; this is my body”.

our world. During this week, we are called to look for ways to reach out to all those who feel they have no body and to share God's love with them.

In today's Passion narratives, we hear the details of several events: Jesus' Last Supper, His prayer in Gethsemane, Judas's betrayal, the arrest of Jesus, Peter's denial of Jesus, and how Jesus was accused and sentenced to death. Through today's reading, we come to know that Jesus, as a human person experiences pain and suffering and goes through inner struggle. At this time, He is expecting His disciples to be awake and watchful. It is also an invitation for all of us to reflect upon the Pascal Mystery of Jesus Christ and our call to follow Him. Let us check and reflect on how strong our faith is in Jesus as He goes through suffering under the weight of the cross.

Pray and Practise: As we journey with the suffering Christ, let us ask the Father to be our support and guide so that, remaining in faith, we may walk with His Son, Jesus Christ.

It is a natural human tendency to expect something in return when we reach out to someone. A few people help others without looking for benefits. In the prayer for Generosity, St. Ignatius of Loyola calls us to labour without expecting any reward. The act of serving others demonstrates a sincere desire, a kind heart, and a willingness to put in a lot of effort.

3 MON SERVE WITHOUT EXPECTATION

David Ekka, SJ

Is 42:1-7

Jn 12:1-11

“Behold my servant...”

In the first reading, we hear that God is delighted with His Son, who is carrying out the will of His Father by establishing justice for everyone and becoming a beacon of light for all peoples. The Gospel, on the other hand, uses Mary’s gesture of anointing Jesus’ feet with oil as an illustration of selfless service. Her generous gesture of service to Jesus expresses her love and gratitude to God. Unlike Judas, who disapproved of Mary’s action because of his selfish intentions and concealed agenda, this deed was motivated only by love. Mary is used as an example to show us how to serve others without thinking about ourselves. Despite our best efforts, there are occasions when Judas’ mentality comes through, and our service becomes self-serving rather than charitable. It is a good time to ponder over how we can emulate Mary’s selfless behaviour as we enter into this Holy Week. Consider how we can use our time, skills, energy, and other resources to help others.

Pray and Practise: Lord, bless us and help us to express our love and gratitude to Jesus for what He did and continues to do for us even today.

**4 TUE
FAITH
GLORIFIES**

THAT

David Kullu, SJ

Is 49: 1-6

Jn 13:21-33, 36-38

*"You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be
glorified".*

In the first reading, God invites us to listen to Him. He gave assurance of a hopeful life to the Israelites who were in exile that they would be freed from the bondage of slavery. He made a unique covenant relationship with His chosen people to bring salvation. Through the Israelites, God wanted to bring salvation to the entire world.

Throughout history, we find that the Israelites failed to listen to the voice of God. But God's fidelity remained ever faithful. He never abandoned them, and they became the mediators of God's salvific act in the world.

We are in the Passion Week, and it is the right time to experience and understand the Paschal mystery of Christ. We find in the Gospel that Jesus is troubled at the moment of His crisis. He knows that one of His disciples is going to betray Him. Therefore, He asks His disciple to act quickly, which shows His purpose to suffer willingly. He fulfilled His mission faithfully by sacrificing His life on the cross to bring salvation. He liberated us from the bondage of sin. God knows our evil plans, yet He gives us freedom. He is so loving and caring. So, we need to reflect on our faithfulness to God. He invites us to live faithfully every day to share His sacrificial love with our neighbours to be glorified.

Pray and practise: Lord, give us strength and courage to remain faithful in times of crisis and difficulties.

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah calls us for intimacy with the Master. It is the secret of the servant of the Lord. It is achieved through morning listening, a fundamental characteristic of the Lord's disciple, who never begins a day without spending time at the feet of the Lord. Each morning, the disciple wants to hear the voice of the Lord, who indicates which road to follow. This listening will develop the follower into a good disciple who is always ready to learn from the Master.

05 WED
MY TIME IS AT HAND

R. GNANA, SJ

Is 50: 4-9a

Mt 26: 14-25

"Surely not I, Rabbi?"

Today's Gospel helps us remember the various conflicts, betrayals and deceit that we have experienced from time to time in our lives. It is comforting to know that God, our refuge and hiding place, is always with us, and He will deliver us from our situation in this period of darkness. As Judas agrees to betray Jesus, likewise, we too experience betrayal in different ways in our lives. But Jesus will strengthen and give us His perfect peace in the midst of our difficulties and sufferings. His sacrifices, offerings and death help us to be strong in our faith so we can receive His grace to respond with a compassionate, loving and forgiving heart to others, especially to those who have wronged us. Have there been times in our lives when we also have betrayed Jesus? Jesus will never stop loving and inviting us to come to Him no matter what we do! Will you accept His call?

Pray and Practise: Lord, help us to walk in Your way and bless us with a compassionate and forgiving heart.

**06 THU (MAUNDY THURSDAY)
AN ACT OF LOVE**

Oscar Daniel Raj A, SJ

Ex 12: 1-8, 11-14

1 Cor 11:23-26

Jn 13:1-15

“You love one another as I have loved you”.

His impending suffering and death as a work of service. The nature of service is not in terms of historical forms of service (such as foot washing) but in its inner structure and realisation in human relationships. To lay down one's life is the ultimate preferring of another's good to one's own.

Every act of service is essentially an act of self-gift and tends toward the total self-gift. The superiorities and inferiorities of nature and grace are neither denied nor cloaked. They are simply transcended and transformed by friendship. Jesus gives a new definition of love which is to love unto the death of one's friends. The ultimate purpose of service is love. Human beings and all other creatures continue to exist because of love. Out of love for humanity, the Son of God came down and bent Himself towards humanity and washed the feet. There is no greater form of love than this. Are we ready to do the same as Jesus?

Pray and Practise: Lord, give us the hearts to love and serve others as You did. Make us a channel of Your peace and service to all, especially to the fallen humanity.

Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper, the institution of the Holy Eucharist and the Promulgation of Jesus' new commandment of love by washing the foot of the disciples. The foot washing is not so much of humility but a loving service. It is a prophetic action of Jesus. It is a symbol which characterises

His impending suffering and death as a work of service. The nature of service is not in terms of historical forms of service (such as foot washing) but in its inner structure and realisation in human relationships. To lay down one's life is the ultimate preferring of another's good to one's own.

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There is a proverb: “No pain, no gain”. Indeed, it is true. There is a deeper meaning hidden in suffering. In fact, nothing great can be achieved without undergoing pain and suffering in life. Each one of us has seen and experienced pain and suffering at some point in our lives. Obviously, when we have reflected, we have found that it has helped us to find meaning and to be strong in our journey of life. It has helped us to achieve our purpose in life. The observance of Good Friday is also a memorial for us all of the deeds of our Lord Jesus Christ. It reminds us of the pain, suffering and death that He underwent for the sake of us all. His passion and death were the pathways to salvation for the entire humanity. It was the means to real glorification.

The readings of the day highlight on the fruitful outcome of the pain, suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus had to undergo a lot of pain, suffering, rejection and finally death all through His life here on earth. Despite being the Son of God, He embraced all of these because of the love He has for us all. Because of His suffering, the entire humanity has been healed and received salvation.

Pray and Practise: Lord, give us the courage to be rooted and grounded firmly in our faith, even at the cost of embracing the pain and suffering in our life for the cause of truth and justice.

07 FRI (GOOD FRIDAY) MEANING IN SUFFERING

Pankaj Kerketta, SJ

Is 52:13-53:12
Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9
Jn 18:1-19:42

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth...”

**08 SAT (EASTER
VIGIL)
CHRIST IS OUR
LIFE**

Amal Jose, CST

Rom 6: 3-11
Mt 28:1-10

*“Come, see the place
where he lay”.*

Today we commemorate the greatest event in history, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter is everything to the Christians, and it should be everything to everyone. It is impossible to keep Jesus in the tomb. He rules over everything. Because He is God and the Creator of all things, there is no higher authority than Jesus Christ. Paul refers to Jesus' death on the cross as a singular, once-and-for-all event. He consented to death, but after His resurrection, death was vanquished. It had no power over Him anymore. Jesus was never again subject to death. We are on the same path as Jesus, the people who put their faith in Christ for redemption also perished, were buried, and then rose to fresh spiritual life. Now that we have become so strongly associated with Christ, God accepts our imbursement for Christ's atoning death in exchange for our sin. Literally, “Christ is our life.”

We can picture the women who went to the tomb to bind Him in ointment and give Him a proper burial. Then they took off, but lo and behold, they ran across Him on the road. He and us cross paths every day as we go about our regular lives. He appears to us when we are in need. He comes to us when we are happy.

Pray and Practise: Let us ask the grace to realise that we are never truly alone and that when our hearts are inclined toward heaven, He leads us there, that is when we meet him.

Today the Church celebrates Easter, the greatest feast in the church. On this day, we commemorate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It became the greatest feast because resurrection is the basis of Christianity. And it is through Easter, Jesus proclaimed that He is the true God. That is why the Easter message became the core of the disciples' proclamation later.

09 SUN (EASTER) A CALL TO BELIEVE

Bony Mathew, CST

Acts 10: 34a.37-43

Col 3:1-4

Jn 20-1-9

".... and he saw and believed".

It is a feast of hope and victory. Jesus has done the greatest miracle through His own resurrection going beyond human nature. He won over sin and death and calls us for a new life of freedom. It's a feast of hope because, through His resurrection, we are saved and have received a new life; thus, we are called the Easter people. Some of the editions of the Bible refer to this passage as the 'empty tomb'. But it is not the empty tomb; rather, it's a pointer towards Christ who has risen. So, the message of Easter is also not something about emptiness rather, it's all about the fullness of life in Jesus Christ. And the fruit of the resurrection is the increase of faith in the people. So, Easter removes the emptiness from our life and replaces it with the Easter joy of hope, victory and life after death.

Pray and Practise: Going after hope is Easter. So let us ask for the grace to have hope in our life at all times so that we may celebrate Easter every day in our life.

**10 MON
ARE YOU
READY TO BE
WITNESSES?**

Arockia Carmel Raj,
IMS

Acts 2: 14. 22-33

Mt 28: 8-15

"This Jesus God raised up and of that all of us are witnesses".

One cannot hide the seed under the mud, obviously. It may delay some days and vigorously breaks the mud and sprouts gracefully. In the Gospel, we see that some forcefully wanted to bury the truth that Jesus has risen. Mary Magdalena's experience of truth brings fear and joy. The fear is due to unpreparedness for the risen Lord and the joy is about seeing the light of life. This experience makes her a witness to the followers.

The witnessing is not the bed of roses but of thorns. It demands more from each one of us, Jesus gave witness to Abba Father and sacrificed His own life. The followers witnessed and had to sacrifice their lives for the sake of light. The term witness is not carrying a negative connotation that the end is miserable, but it is more joyful than what we imagine. It keeps us closer to God and to each other. It gives us the joy of serving God and His people. Are you ready to witness? If one agrees, it is a particular movement and it continues throughout our life. Its consequences are seen in the communitarian life in societies. Witnessing gives us hope of joy in the Lord and paving the way to be an heir of God.

Pray and Practise: Lord of light, give us the heart of courage so that we can be a witness to that true light in our lives and become participants in Your glory.

The first reading from Acts recalls the Spirit-filled preaching of Peter that led to about three thousand converts. The message was simple and clear that God raised the crucified Jesus and made Him Lord and Messiah, bringing salvation to humanity.

God's greatest gift to us is His Son, Jesus Christ. In baptism, we receive the forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit and the promise of eternal life. Believing is action-oriented, and for us, this action comes from the love we have for Jesus. It is true that we become affectionate and cling to someone whom we truly love, and when we miss that person, we weep, worry, and seek until we find the person. In today's Gospel, too, Mary Magdalena has a similar experience, she not only loved the Lord but also showed it in action and became a witness, being a messenger of the Lord's resurrection. And this is the mission that the Lord has given to all of us as baptised Christians, that we share the resurrection experience and proclaim it to the whole world. And in doing so, we continue the redemptive work of Jesus Christ here on Earth. A pertinent question to ask ourselves today would be how much do we really love the Lord? Do we, like Mary Magdalene go in search of the Lord? And finally, how much do we share our 'resurrection experience' with others and bear witness to our glorified Lord?

Pray and Practise: Dear Lord, give us the grace to love You truly and thus become ardent disciples to proclaim the good news to the entire world.

**11 TUE (Easter Octave)
WITNESS THE LOVE OF JESUS**

M. Manohar, IMS

Act 2: 36-41
Jn 20: 11-18

"Whom are you looking for?"

12 WED (Easter Octave)
GOD OF SURPRISES

Pelevito Patrick Kipfe,
SJ

Acts 3: 1-10
Lk 24: 13-35

“Stay with us”.

At every encounter with the Divine, there exists an initial doubt ending with awe and wonder. This is because God has the power to change our state of living at any given point in time. We see a reflection of God as a silent listener performing acts of mercy and restoring hope. A lame man gets healed in the name of Jesus through the apostles, Peter and John. Similarly, the faith and trust of the two disciples were restored by Jesus’ presence amidst dejection and hopelessness. The Gospel narrative sheds light on our disposition toward the all-powerful God. When things go well in our life, we are least bothered about God. We cry our hearts out only when difficulties come our way.

What could we learn from these episodes? Certainly, a lesson of spiritual nourishment about undying hope in the Lord. Oftentimes in our lives, when we close the lens of our eyes and the hearing passage to our ears, the master of creation visits us when we least expect it. At the opportune time, God surprises us and transforms our fortunes. The hallmark of every Christian vocation is to be another Christ. It means to become messengers of hope and agents of love. Today, before us, two deformities are presented. One is spiritual and the other is physical. Both groups received healing from their respective ailments.

Pray and practise: God of hope and justice, help us to never lose sight of You. Grant us the perseverance to cultivate a will rooted in hope and conviction no matter what comes our way.

As I reflected on the readings of today, my first impression was about the disciples getting awestruck thinking Jesus could be a ghost, and Jesus' assurance, "Peace be with you". Jesus' disciples had doubts and fears. We too are in the same boat—when we lose our loved ones, as doubts inevitably arise. We dearly miss the person who has passed. At times I, too, recall the few times in my life when I have actually felt Jesus' presence when looking upon another human.

Sometimes, when looking at a loved one, or giving care to a person in need, God reveals His presence to us and we are awestruck.

In almost every situation in our world today, there is a need for peace. Amid the global pandemic, international conflicts, inter-religious tensions, political campaigns, natural disasters, immoral lifestyles, broken families, and our own inner turmoil, many of us feel that peace is out of reach, yet we long for it. Where can we find that peace? We will fail if we search for it in any other place. Because peace does not come from our own efforts, from what we do or do not do, from how stressful our life is or is not, and with how many overwhelming conflicts occur all around us. Rather, peace comes only from the risen Lord God. In Him and with Him alone will we find peace. In Risen Lord alone is our peace. Let us all try to hear Him speak to our hearts today, "Peace be with you."

Pray and Practise: Amid all the conflicts and stress today, dear Risen Lord, grant us the grace to receive Your peace.

13 THU (Easter Octave)

THE AFFIRMATION OF THE RISEN LORD

Swarupa Rani, SCN

Acts 3:11-26

Lk 24:35-48

"Peace be with you".

14 FRI (Easter Octave)
TRUST IN THE LORD

Ankit John

Acts 4:1-12
Jn 21:1-14

“Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some”.

In the first reading, the Pharisees were astonished at the self-confidence of the two apostles, considering that they were uneducated fishermen. They had no training in rabbinic schools. They were, in the eyes of their judges, “only” lay people. It is important to remember that faith and convictions do not depend on learning. It is also clearly implied that the source of their strength and confidence is Jesus and the

Holy Spirit. Our Church consists of the highest intellectuals and also complete illiterates: all have equal access to knowing and loving God, and all have equal access to the highest levels of contemplation, mysticism, and sanctity.

Jesus cares and is interested in our work and lives and knows what we need. We see this in today’s Gospel reading when He encourages the disciples to cast their nets one more time after an unsuccessful night of fishing. His intervention surprised the disciples with a bountiful catch. Not only is Peter’s livelihood assured, but Jesus also cares about His nutrition needs “Come and have breakfast” and bring some of what you have caught. We are assured that God is in our midst, involved in our day today struggles. Deliberately try to leave spaces in your schedule to allow for interruptions, they may be life’s surprises. Trusting that Jesus knows what we need, allow Him to transform and lighten our load and accept His care and attention.

Pray and Practise: Dear Jesus, we thank you for nourishing us with your word and warming us with the fire of Your unfailing love. Help us to share them with all we encounter.

We all received a great gratuitous gift from the Lord and that is faith. Indeed, it is very difficult to grow in this gift and bring forth its fruits, but it is the only key that can open the narrow door towards eternal life. The theme of today's readings is to have boldness in faith. We can see in the first reading how Peter and John defend their faith in front of the council with boldness. And in the Gospel, we can read how the faith of the disciples was shallow even after receiving the testimony of some that Jesus is alive, and Jesus rebuked them for it because they had not believed those who saw Him after he had risen. The Word of God says about the meaning of faith, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1) St Paul also exhorts us in his letter to Romans that we are justified by faith just like Abraham.

Faith is holding onto God's hand and letting us hold it very tightly so that no temptations and difficult situations can separate it. God always extend His hands towards us. Let us try to see God's hands in all circumstances and hold them securely so that we may have boldness in faith. For faith leads us to love God and our neighbour, let our faith be seen in our boldness to preach Risen Christ in our daily life.

Pray and Practise: Lord, increase our faith and help us to hold Your hands at all times of our lives.

15 SAT BOLDNESS FAITH

IN

Jophin P J

Acts 4:13-21

Mk 16:9-15

"And he upbraided them for their lack of faith and stubbornness".

**16 SUN (DIVINE
MERCY SUNDAY)
UNFAILING MERCY**

Mari John F

Acts 2:42-47

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

*“Whose sins you
forgive, they are
forgiven”.*

their love and mercy by sharing what they had with everyone in need. The second reading shows that St. Peter glorifies God, the Father, for showing us His mercy through His Son, Jesus. Resurrection from the dead and a glorious Ascension into Heaven, thus offering us the assurance of our own resurrection, entry into Heaven, and “imperishable and unfading” heavenly bliss.

In today’s Gospel, as we recall Jesus’ appearance to the Apostles on that first Easter evening, we are vividly reminded of the Sacrament of Reconciliation – the power to forgive sins which Our Lord gave to His Apostles, saying, “Whose sins you forgive.....they are retained” (Jn 20:23). It also emphasises the importance of Faith in the all-pervading presence of the risen Lord of Mercy. To “believe without having seen” is every later Christian’s experience.

Pray and practise: We are invited to receive liberation from doubts and hesitation by surrendering our lives to the risen Lord of Mercy. Let us ask God our Father to open our hearts so that we may receive His Mercy through the Holy Spirit.

Once St. John Paul II said, “Divine Mercy reaches human beings through the heart of Christ crucified.” Today’s readings invite us to experience and show the mercy of Christ to the whole of suffering humanity. The first reading shows us how the early Church grew every day because of the acts of mercy and sharing, sacrificial agape love, practised by the early Christians. They expressed

The believing community prays for perseverance and boldness. In the midst of persecution, what makes the community sustain their faith? It is not just the human effort alone but the intervention of the risen Lord strengthens the persecuted community. God also suffers with His people when they face tribulations by giving the grace of endurance. After the early centuries of the Church, many believers paid the price of their lives by shedding their blood for their faith in Christ. Many became martyrs. One of the first martyrs of North America, St. Isaac Jogues, upheld his unwavering faith even after his hands were mutilated.

17 MON BORN ANEW

Ashwin Kujur, SJ

Acts 4:23-31
Jn 3:1-8

"You must be born from above".

What does to be born anew mean? The invitation of Christ to be born anew in the spirit paves the way for a new beginning. The new birth is a start; it is a call about a spiritual rebirth into the life of Christ in order that we all share in the sonship of Jesus. As we know that baptism is the utmost requirement for salvation. Therefore, being born of water and Spirit is necessary. The Catholic Church recognises three types of baptism by which we can be saved: the Sacrament of baptism with water, the baptism of desire and the baptism of blood. The belief is that this will make us true sons and daughters of the Father. Hence, we are called to embrace a rebirth in the Spirit.

Pray and Practise: God, our almighty Father, give us the gift of the Holy Spirit so that we live as children who are born anew in the Spirit.

18 TUE ONE HEART AND MIND

Sanjay Bodra, SJ

Acts 4: 32-37

Jn 3: 7b-15

“Whoever believes in him may have eternal life”.

because the community of believers were of one heart and mind.

In today's Gospel, we find how Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews, comes to see Jesus and wants to know more about Him. Jesus tells him that he has to be born again from above. What Jesus really means for Nicodemus to be born of the Spirit. This happens through Baptism. It is not just about the Baptism itself, but about what it means to live in the Spirit. In baptism, we are united with Christ and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is the way to heaven and we become members of the Trinitarian community. Jesus says, “The wind blows wherever it chooses, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit”. The spirit does not go according to our will but He goes according to His will. Jesus is inviting us to come out from the illusion of comfort and safety of our control. He is calling us to depend upon and trust in Him.

Pray and Practise: Let us ask the Lord to bless us with the power of understanding so that we may believe and trust in Jesus.

Today's first reading emphasises the community of believers who are of one heart and mind, deeply united with each other. No one could claim anything as belonging to themselves; everything was held in common. There are no rich or poor in this community. There is voluntary sharing to provide for those who do not have essential needs for their living. This was possible

In the first reading, we learn that the apostles witnessed a miraculous act of the risen Christ in their lives. They believed that nothing could hold them back—not even the four walls of the prison. They had previously been bound by several reasons, including fear, ignorance, shyness, etc. but were inspired and invigorated when they experienced the risen Christ. All this was possible only because they believed and relied on Him.

19 WED ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST

David Ekka, SJ

Acts 5:17-26

Jn 3:16-21

“Everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life”.

The Gospel reading talks about the unconditional love of God. God loved the world so much that He gave His only begotten Son so that the world may be saved through Him. Jesus has come not to judge the world but rather to provide those trapped in the darkness a way out. Jesus is the light who enters into this darkness of the world to reveal it for what it is. His coming does not bring judgment but a process by which judgment is active on those who witness His coming. Believing in Him and remaining in His light, one may not perish but will have eternal life. The question is, how much do we believe in Him? Do we believe more in Him or in material things? We need to believe in Jesus, who redeems us not only from our sins but from every kind of darkness hindering us from moving towards the light. When we receive light, we can show the light to others who are in darkness.

Pray and Practise: Lord, grant us the grace that we may believe that Jesus is the saviour, and in believing in Him, we may have eternal life.

20 THU TO OBEY GOD

David Kullu, SJ

Acts 5: 27-33

Jn 3:31-36

"We must obey God rather than men".

Today's first reading reminds us of the power of the Holy Spirit. After ascending to heaven, Jesus promised the Holy Spirit, who would guide His disciples and followers. The power of the Holy Spirit is obvious in the life of His disciples. They are filled with the spirit and boldly proclaim Jesus Christ, the living God. Gospel passage reveals Jesus's divinity, that Jesus belongs to heaven and has come down to the earth. Hence, all are invited to obey God, our source of life and guide.

We, Christians, believe in the trinitarian God. In our lives, the Holy Spirit plays a vital role in sanctifying. It is a gift given to those who obey God. We see that the disciples had a very close and living experience of Jesus. But they had not realised the real divinity of Jesus what they had witnessed. Perfect obedience is found in Jesus. "He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death- even death on a cross." (Phil 2:8). When we obey the will of God, then we become part of His kingdom and divinity. By obeying Him, we become the sharer of His divine life. To experience His divine life, we must obey His commandments faithfully and love one another. All of us are missioned to give witness to the people around us with our actions and deeds. In this process, the Holy Spirit guides us constantly every day.

Pray and practise: Let us seek the daily guidance and strengthening of the Holy Spirit, who reveals Divine truths to us.

The first reading teaches God's saving power for His servants and the mission. Gamaliel suggested that, on the basis of Theudas and Judas, the Galilean movements, this 'Jesus' movement should be left alone. This kind of phenomenon occurs constantly and is frequently seen in our Church, and, like Gamaliel, we should have confidence in the principle that, in the long run, the truth will always prevail. We sometimes get very concerned about new ideas or new movements that surface in our Christian communities but the same principle applies.

21 FRI (St Anselm) FEEDING THE HUNGRY

R Gnana, SJ

Act 5: 34-42

Jn 6: 1-15

"Gather up the fragments, so that nothing is lost".

In today's Gospel, when Jesus went across to the Sea of Galilee, there was a large crowd of people who followed Him. It is obvious that some followed to listen to His teachings, and others may be curious. Regardless of the reasons, Jesus still worries that these people might be hungry. It is for this reason that He performs a great miracle for them. This miracle is relevant for us even at this time. Jesus performs miracles for us every day, even if we don't see them. Sometimes, we only need to call His name to ask for these miracles and He will listen to us. This is a reminder of His great love for us. Sinners as we are, if we learn to ask for forgiveness from Him, He will always be there. Each problem we have is not a problem if we have faith in Him.

Pray and Practise: Lord, help us to walk in Your way and teach us to see the poor and the marginalised with compassionate eyes as you always do.

**22 SAT (Mary,
Mother of the
Society)
FAITH AND TRUST**

Oscar Daniel Raj A,
SJ

Rev 21: 1-5a
Jn 19:25-27

*“Then he said to the
disciples, here is your
mother”.*

The figure of Mary was always prominent in Ignatius’ life, especially while he was writing the Exercises and the Constitutions appearing to him repeatedly both at Manresa and in Rome. Those documents form the basis of the Society, and Mary played her part in their development.

One pre-eminent feature of Society’s devotion to Mary is a remarkable trust, in a son for his mother, a mother who showed complete submission in order to give a mother’s service to her son, becoming “the handmaid of the Lord,” which for Ignatius was always the expression of man’s ultimate end. Like Mother Mary, we are all invited to surrender ourselves and be led by the will of the Father. In faith and trust, she journeyed in her life. Let us imitate and ignite the spirit of Mother Mary.

Pray and Practise: Let us pray that we may build our trust in God like Mother Mary, and may we lead a life worthy of His love and mercy.

Mother Mary has been the constant guiding light to the Society of Jesus. Major events in the life of St. Ignatius occurred on feasts or at sites honouring the Virgin. Ignatius’ constant petition “to the Mother” was “that she would place him with her Son.” This grace was granted, and “he felt such a change in his soul that he saw clearly that the Father placed him with his Son in such a way that he could not doubt it.”

**23 SUN (III SUNDAY
OF EASTER)
NEW LIFE IN CHRIST**

Pankaj Kerketta, SJ

Acts 2: 14. 22-33

1 Pt 1:17-21

Lk 24: 13-35

“Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him”.

God is the author of life. The people who have encountered God in Jesus at some point in their lives have experienced new life in body and spirit. In both the first and second readings of the day, we see and witness the testimony of Peter about his experience of Jesus. Through his testimony, he reminds the people about the performance of God's deeds of power, wonders, and signs through his son Jesus when he was here on earth amidst them. God, through Jesus, has touched the lives of numerous people directly, especially those who were diseased and unwell and made them whole again. Now this same God has raised Him from the dead so that we may come to believe in the power of God.

In the Gospel, we see how the risen Lord becomes a companion to the disciples who were on their way to Jerusalem after the death of Jesus. In their moments of pain, sorrow, and despair, He becomes the source of joy, happiness, and hope as He reveals Himself gradually to them. In the breaking of the bread, the disciples' eyes were opened, and they experienced a new life filled with faith, hope, and charity that led them to become the missionary of God's word.

Pray and Practise: Lord, give us the grace so that our eyes may be opened to see the wonders of God in the creation and in our neighbours, and may it enable us to experience new life in You.

**24, MON (St Fidelis
of Sigmaringen)
FOOD GIVES
ETERNAL LIFE**

Amal Jose

Acts 6: 8-15
Jn 6: 22-29

*“Do not work for the
food that perishes....”*

Jesus used five loaves and two fish to feed the hordes of hungry people in the desert. He placed a high value on the fundamental bodily requirements of others. He gave food to the hungry, treated the ill, and urged the wealthy to give to the needy. These fundamental bodily requirements of people have to be taken care of initially. However, a portion of the audience now wants Jesus to give them more of the same after He satisfied their bodily hunger.

Jesus speaks of the food that endures eternal life that He is delivering in response to this focus on Him as the giver of physical bread. He is urging individuals who have sought Him to attend to a deeper, more spiritually based hunger in their life. That is why Jesus compares believing in Him to striving for the food that endures eternal life. That deeper need in our lives, the hunger for an unwavering love, for forgiveness, for truth, for justice, for peace, and ultimately our thirst for God can only be sated by believing in Him. We must eat when we are physically hungry. We might disregard those deeper needs that only Jesus can gratify.

Pray and practise: Let us labour for the food that leads to eternal life and pray for this grace.

Today's Gospel speaks about the commissioning of the disciples after the resurrection, followed by His assurances. We see a universalised form of commissioning here that is from the gentiles to the entire world. Jesus is not sending them empty handed rather gives signs to accompany them. And the fundamental criterion for everything to take place is to believe in God.

25 TUE (St Mark, the Evangelist) TO WITNESS THE GOSPEL

Bony Mathew, CST

1 Pt 5: 5b-14
Mk 16: 15-20

“Go into all the world and proclaim the good news...”

Ultimately, it's an invitation for all of us to be part and partakers of the good news. “Woe to me if I don't preach the Gospel” (1 Cor 9:16). Preaching the good news is not only the duty of the disciples rather the duty of all who believe in Him. And our baptism alone is not enough, we also need to have a staunch belief in Him too. Jesus' assurances through the signs are an indication of the Old Testament teachings, where the faith of the people was nourished through signs. The last verse of the Gospel is the confirmation of what He had told. Jesus' disciples were the means of healing and recovering and the fruits of the works were done through them. So, we, being the followers of Christ, must try to be a means for many to get healed and to receive His graces. This is the sole purpose of our lives, and when we give importance to this our mission will be successful.

Pray and Practise: Lord, make me a witness of Your Gospel so that I may be an instrument for many to be the channel of Your abundance.

**26 WED
SCATTERED TO
GATHER**

Arockia Carmel Raj,
IMS

Acts 8: 1b-8
Jn 6: 35-40

*"I am the bread of
life...."*

Whatever we eat, becomes part of us. The rice we eat is a valuable source of complex carbohydrates, which is a good energy source. God gave manna to the Israelites, which gave nourishment to their physical body but in their mind, they were scattered from God and one another. Here, Jesus promises that He will give His own body and blood, which will give us eternal life. This food is the call to believe and to be united in His relationship. Even though we are divided by many factors like enmity, jealousy, envy and anger, there is a bridge, which unites us, which is Jesus Christ. This unity is not merely a gathering but a mutual relationship.

Moreover, the followers of Jesus Christ scattered due to persecution but they were united in the Spirit. The Persecution made them scatter from one place to another therefore, they could gather together people into one faith. The challenges in life are not the end but they give hope to move ahead with a strong mind and heart. Jesus makes the end endless and leads us to eternal life. We can receive this life by having tremendous faith and being nourished by His body and blood.

Pray and practise: Eternal Father, open up our internal eyes so that we can step forward with faith in the midst of challenges, and we can be part of the whole human family, which is bound by the relationship of Your Son.

A Christian is one called to live the values of Christ. The values of compassion towards the least fortunate and the passion to take Christ to one's neighbour are the cornerstones. How is that possible? Each of us bears an indelible mark of Christ through our baptism, which unites us as one wholesome family of God. Since we have the imprint of the Divine in our hearts, we cannot but exercise that identity through our deeds. In this regard, the first reading gives out a dual call to encourage and exhort one another to preach God's word.

27 THU (SJ: St Peter Canisius)

SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH JOY

Pelevito Patrick Kipfe, SJ

2 Tim 4: 1-5
Mt 5: 13-19

"Put up with suffering, give yourself to your work of preaching".

The Gospel reading complements by emphasising that each of us is a light to the other. In this enterprise, our primary mission is to joyfully share the Gospel with unwavering faith and unceasing love. Each of us is given the mandate to spread the kingdom's values.

Jesus is the light of the world and we are little sparks that have the potential to enkindle others' lives. Coincidentally, today we commemorate the feast of St. Peter Canisius, a fearless messenger of God's word. He was known as the second apostle of Germany. During the times when the Catholic church was tested of its faith, he was a forerunner preaching the values of Christ in encouraging the believers to stand firm together.

Pray and practise: God of heaven and earth, instil in us the fire of prudence and the burning desire to proclaim Your kingdom here on earth. Give us the grace to nurture a heart that is magnanimous.

**28 FRI (Sts Peter Chanel & Louise Marie)
GOD ALONE**

Swarupa Rani, SCN

Acts 9:1-20
Jn: 6:52-59

“Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen”.

God. He understood who Jesus is and went on doing good to others. Many times, we become so wrapped up in our lives by dilemmas, crises or even pride that we forget our true calling and become blind to God’s grace. God is always present with us and reveals Himself to us in simple ways. All we have to do is to open our eyes and be attentive to how God speaks to us and then become instruments in God’s hand.

Today we celebrate the feasts of two saints, namely St. Peter Chanel and St. Louise. St. Peter Chanel, by his suffering and death, converted their hearts. He was fearless in preaching the Gospel. St. Louise experienced challenges in his efforts to follow Jesus. Their love for God was total. It was with God and for God that they went towards other people and walked the roads of the mission, and they became missionaries of extraordinary range and influence.

Pray and Practise: Sovereign God, transform our lives in order to become Your chosen instruments to bring good news to all.

Today, both readings inspire us to have faith in God’s sovereign action. For God works upon human beings interiorly, transforming them, and giving them new life. He chooses them as His instruments to work for the Reign of God.

In today’s first reading, the encounter of Saul becomes the turning point of his life; it is the moment of his return to the true

The readings of today highlight that healing in Lydda and Joppa spread like wildfire throughout the whole town and was the cause for many to believe in Jesus and the Gospel. Jesus' healing and life-giving work continue among us still. The only condition for us to experience it is our faith and trust in Him. It might be good for us to realise that each one of us can, in our own way, be a source of healing to others. The normal way for Jesus to act is through the agency of His brothers and sisters, the members of His Body.

29 SAT HAVE FAITH IN HIM

Ankit John

Acts 9:31-42

Jn 6:60-69

"Lord to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life".

In today's Gospel passage, Peter finds that Jesus' words are 'words of eternal life'. What does this mean? A new and better world is opening up for him, the world of God. He is beginning to see things as Jesus sees them. He is learning to love people as Jesus loves them. His dull predictable life is becoming fresh, surprising, and hopeful because of Jesus. To understand the real meaning of Jesus' words comes from the gift, the grace of faith: Faith is a gift. It is a gift open to all but it is a gift to which one needs to be open to receive. Let us ask for the faith and strength to stay with Him and experience the life that only He can give.

Pray and Practise: Dear Lord, give us the grace to always be near You, understand you, and see and serve others as You would.

**30 SUN (IV
SUNDAY OF
EASTER)
LIFE IN THE
EUCHARIST**

Jophin P J

Acts 2:14a,36-41

1 Pet 2:20-25

Jn 10:1-10

*"I came that they
may have life and
have it abundantly".*

Life is all about nourishment, nourishment of the body, mind and soul. This nourishment implies taking the life of something else for the sustenance of life. In every act of nourishment, there is the presence of life and death. In today's Gospel, Jesus talks to us that He came to this world so that we may have life in abundance. St. Peter tells us through today's second reading how Jesus gave Himself upon the cross for us to have that eternal life. By His wounds, we have been healed. For our spiritual nourishment, Jesus died on the Cross and gave us life. This nourishment happens every day in the Holy Eucharist. The Eucharist is a unique sacrament because it manifests the author of grace and life. It is a sacramental meal through which Christ's sacrifice is re-presented and the faith community is nourished.

Jesus invites us to have this life in abundance every day through Eucharist. He said, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." By part taking in the Eucharist, we are called to be nourished and to nourish others as well. Let us sacrifice ourselves so that others may have life. Receive Eucharist and be Eucharist.

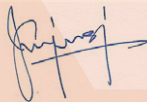
Pray and Practice: Lord, give us the grace to have a special love for Eucharist and make us worthy to take part in it so that we may be Eucharist for others.

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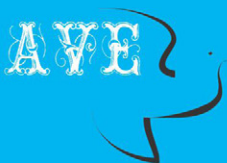
ST. MARK THE PURE APOSTLE & MARTYR.

“A humble man who lives a spiritual life, when he reads the Holy Scriptures, while relate all things to himself and not to others.!”

– St. Mark the Evangelist

COVER

The Holy Spirit, the all pervading presence of God in Jesus Christ, is symbolised by the dove. The Spirit envelops the entire world with God's grace and action. May the Spirit guide us in our experience of the Divine, enlighten our lives through daily reflection on the Scriptures — the 'AVE'.



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