

Dear Parishioners,

I would like to wish all of you a very happy and blessed Easter. God's infinite Love has arisen from the tomb of death to bring us life forever in the kingdom of heaven.

This is an interesting time for us to be Christians. We are called to be people of peace in a time of war, discrimination, division, and hate. We call ourselves a "Christian Nation" because we were founded upon the principles of the Christian faith; we are "a people set apart." But we have entered into a bloody conflict with Iraq, our young people are risking their lives to defend the people of Iraq and our national interests, but the Church has said this is not a just war. How will the risen Christ bring us peace? He will do this by changing our hearts, so that we will be peaceful people.

At the same time we hear fascinating, and I would dare to say frightening news about the Apocryphal Gospel of Judas, and the Da Vinci Code. Will these alter our faith? Will they draw people away from the Church, and the truths we profess? I hope they don't. My guess is that these could actually have the potential to help strengthen our faith. The Gospel of Judas was, as I understand it, written over 150 years after Jesus rose from the dead so whoever wrote it was not an eyewitness of Jesus' life and passion. It sounds to me like it's more of a gnostic rationalization of why Judas Iscariot did what he did.

The movie the Da Vinci Code is based on a novel written by Daniel Brown. In it, he states a theory that says Jesus married Mary Magdalene, that they had children, and that their blood line remains to this day. It's a novel. He is telling a story. This is something made up. Yes there was research done; others have professed this theory as well. Just because this has been written down doesn't mean it's true. But, it is good to read books like this, or go to movies that challenge the way we think. Sometimes we have to take the opportunity to refute untruth so that we can cling to what we know is true.

The long and short of what I am trying to say in this rambling Easter letter is that these are challenging days for us to be Christians. My hope is that our celebration of the resurrection of Jesus will fill our hearts and souls

with such great joy that we will cling to what we hold to be true: namely, that Jesus suffered, died, and rose again so that we might have eternal life in God's kingdom. May we be strengthened by this joy to live our faith as fully as we can even with all that challenges us.

In joyful hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Timothy J. Seigel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'T'.

Fr. Tim Seigel