

Dear Parishioners,

We are now half way through the Lenten Season. As usual, it is going so fast it seems almost impossible to keep up with the daily schedule and, at the same time, the commitments to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. I have always believed that we can only do the best we can; no one can ask any more of us than the best we can give.

The best is yet to come. It is so important for us to keep our focus on that joyful day of resurrection to new life we call Easter. Even though we may not fulfill all of the spiritual obligations to which we set our minds on Ash Wednesday, we can find great joy and comfort in knowing that Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection, the Paschal Mystery, is what we have entered into. Furthermore, we have already received the fruits of this mystery and we look forward to receiving the fullness of salvation on the day of our own resurrection.

For this reason I wish to encourage everyone to come and celebrate Holy Week and the Triduum which begins on Holy Thursday night and concludes with the celebration of the Easter Vigil, the most important liturgical celebration of the entire year.

Come and enter the city of Jerusalem with palm branches and join the Lord's triumphant entry into the city with the crowds singing Hosanna in the Highest. Come and ponder the question as we read the Passion, where did they all go?

Come and partake of the Lord's Meal, the Last Supper. This celebration is ongoing, it did not end when Jesus went into the garden of Gethsemane, it is still happening today, and we are part of it.

Come mourn and celebrate the powerful Good Friday Service. The Church, not just our parish but the entire Church throughout the world, resembles the tomb of Christ. The Eucharist will be removed from the sanctuary and there will be no representation of the body of Christ in the Church. We will hear the Passion read once again and we will venerate the cross, which is not only the sign of death, but also the sign of God's great love that brings us salvation and eternal life.

Come and celebrate the Risen Christ who is revealed in those who are going to enter into the Church at the Easter Vigil through the Sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation. For the Church throughout the world this night is a time for us to rejoice in new birth as we see Christ rise in those who enter in.

Come and celebrate Easter Sunday, the day of eternal spring, the day of eternal salvation, the day in which the Son rises to reveal the light of God's love for all the world to see.

We may not be living perfectly the spiritual disciplines we set out to practice on Ash Wednesday. Still, we are called to celebrate the gift of eternal salvation that Jesus Christ has given us, as we celebrate the Paschal Mystery. This must be our focus now as we continue our Lenten journey.

In joyful hope,
Fr. Tim Seigel