

‘EASTER SUNDAY’ 2020 - ALLELUIA’
Easter Sunday ~ 12 April 2020



Why seek ye the living among the dead? | John Stanhope | public domain

HOLY WEEK

During this week we have welcomed into our homes online -

- The Celebration of Mass on *Palm Sunday* livestreamed at 9am to begin Holy Week.
https://youtu.be/5wb8il_ERm0
- On *Holy Thursday* evening at 7pm, we shared the Reading of the Gospel with a reflection on the washing of feet and pondered what are appropriate acts of service during the pandemic. We prayed our [Parish Mission Prayer](#). We concluded with a Garden of Gethsemane reflection (music and photos of the empty Tabernacle in our chapel, and gazing at the pathway photos of our prayer garden).
<https://youtu.be/WwpCmHFtt0E>
- On Good Friday morning at 9.30am, we joined Clint online for *The Stations of the Cross*.
<https://youtu.be/V4g2eVEqcdo>
- On Good Friday afternoon at the sacred time of 3pm, we joined online for livestreaming of our local *Good Friday Ceremony*.
<https://youtu.be/wx5-6szVxB4>
- Today, *Easter Sunday* at our 9am, we livestream our celebration of the Easter Mass in our church. <https://youtu.be/lkXzejD2z3w>
- During this past week, and in the week ahead, we pray our fourteen-day prayer reflection, introduced online each day on our parish social media.
<https://www.stjosephsbrackenridge.com/homeretreat.html>

LET US TURN TO THE CROSS BEFORE US

The remaining purple cloth symbolizes our continuing sadness during the pandemic. The new white cloth symbolizes the reality of Jesus risen from the dead.

GOSPEL of MATTHEW 28:1-10 – Gospel Reading of the Easter Vigil Year A.

There are two Easter Gospel passages this year –

1. In today’s homily we read last night’s [Easter Vigil Gospel from Matthew](#).
2. Many have received the passage of John’s Gospel 20:1-9 which you are invited to read tonight in your prayer.

Let us turn to the Gospel of Matthew together.

The disciples journeyed within their hearts and minds

- from outright fear
- to being disciples with both fear and great joy,
- to being graced by the loving encounter with the Risen Christ, and an absence of fear.

The Passage begins:

“After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.”

Today we go to the tomb of our hearts.

We ask God to roll back anything that prevents us or hinders us from trusting in God’s love for us.

The angel prepares the way for us.

We thank God for the people in our lives who have prepared the way for us.

We thank God for the two Marys who seek out Jesus.

All Christian disciples are called to be seekers of Jesus Christ.

The passage continues:

‘And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men.’

We remember back to the Transfiguration earlier in the ministry of Jesus when the disciples *“fell to the ground and were overcome by fear.”*

The Greek word for fear comes into the English language as Phobia.

Our fears are called phobia. Jesus touched them, saying **“Get up and do not be afraid”**.

Now at Easter, after Jesus has risen, and with the sight of the angel, the guards fear the angel.

The angel’s *“appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow”*.

With this description we are reminded of the transfiguration.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary are faithful witnesses and disciples.

The angel says to the women *“Do not be afraid”*

And they are given a mission – to tell the news to the disciples.

They still have fear, but now with it is great joy.

The passage continues:

‘But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.’

*Then go quickly and tell his disciples,
'He has been raised from the dead,
and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee;
there you will see him.' This is my message for you."
So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy,
and ran to tell his disciples.'*

Being faithful, they run to tell the Good News.
The Risen Jesus appears to them and greets them. They worship him.

EASTER CELEBRATIONS OVER PAST YEARS

At the beginning of our Easter Mass we looked at photos
of our Easter celebrations over past years.
And in this time of COVID-19,
we treasure those photos of being together in our wonderful church.

WE TREASURE

In living our mission daily, we treasure those moments
when Jesus greets us in prayer and through others.
We treasure the moments when we worship him.
We treasure this moment of Eucharist.
We treasure being together online in Jesus Christ. Connected.

The passage continues:

*'Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "**Greetings!**"
And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him.*

Once again they are told, this time by the Risen Jesus
"Do not be afraid"

Then Jesus said to them,

***"Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee;
there they will see me."***

As we see from the Resurrection in Chapter 28 above
and from the Transfiguration in Chapter 17,
we are not to be afraid of sharing the Good News of Jesus.

PREPARING TO RENEW OUR FAITH

Pope Francis reminded us last week, that during this pandemic,
we can live a creativity of love as we care for each other.

From creative online faith resources to phone calls and emails.

From shopping for others, sharing stories and good-natured humour,
to saving lives by social distancing and isolation.

The two women have met the Risen Jesus, overcome their fears, and worshipped Jesus.
We too overcome any paralysis from fear.

Trusting only in ourselves, we are afraid.
Trusting in God, we learn to let go of the fears that hold us back from loving God more deeply and joyfully.

In a spirit of courage, we rejoice and say *Alleluia*.

THE EASTER CANDLE

After the treasured photos earlier,
we moved forward with the presentation
and lighting of our new Easter Candle for the year ahead.

WE RENEW OUR BAPTISMAL VOWS

The Easter Candle is now processed forward once more.
And we now renew our baptismal promises.
We say '*do*' each time in response to the baptismal Creed presented in question form to us.

As disciples of Jesus, let us now stand wherever we are and renew our baptismal promises.

Let us all stand as one family.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ is Risen. Alleluia.

Fr Gerry

[Readings <http://universalis.com/Australia/20200411/mass.htm>]



Lord, guide us to fulfil
our mission as the
Catholic parish of
St Joseph and St Anthony
- to live as a faith
community, guided by
The Spirit to recognise
Jesus in each other.

As we go into the future
we will strive to act justly,
love tenderly and walk
humbly with our God.
Amen.

OUR MISSION PRAYER