

'EASTER' - HOMILY – 16 APRIL 2017

ALLELUIA

The Easter word - Alleluia.

During the season of Lent, we have not said the word.

Waiting until the Easter celebration of Christ rising from the dead.

Now we proclaim "Alleliua".

Let us turn to each other and proclaim "Alleluia". (pause)

LAST NIGHT AT THE EASTER VIGIL MASS

Last night at the Easter Vigil Mass:

- **WE CELEBRATED THE EASTER FIRE AND GOD'S CREATION**

Our call to care for our common home on earth.

Uncle David acknowledged country, used the clap sticks, and we prayed for the Indigenous Peoples.

In particular this year, we prayed for the healing of the living Great Barrier Reef in Queensland.

In our parish newsletter were the two creation prayers from Pope Francis in his teaching *Laudato Si'*.

- **THE NEW EASTER CANDLE WAS BLESSED AND LIT FOR THE FIRE**

We responded "Thanks be to God" 3 times to the proclamation "The Light of Christ" during the procession to the church, and

We remembered that Jesus is our Light on our journey in life.

- **WE LISTENED TO GOD'S REACHING OUT TO US IN HISTORY** through several Biblical Readings.

The first of the Readings is the Genesis story of creation.

Later we listened to an 1841 translation that some of the Aboriginal People used in this northern district of Brisbane.

The readings and responses continue.

A reflection on the Gospel Reading, Matthew 28/1-10 is below.

- **WE JOYFULLY CALLED NEW ADULT MEMBERS FORWARD TO THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION**

Jee Ah, Murray, Troy and Owen received the Sacrament of **Baptism**.

Emma and **Melanie** were received into the Catholic Church.

Amy's Catholic baptism 5 years ago was recalled.

Each of these special people spoke in their own words about who and what lead them to this moment of commitment and grace.

All seven special people received the **Sacrament of Confirmation and received Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time**.

Thank you for your inspiration.

Let us turn now to the Gospel of Matthew 28:1-10.

The journey from **fearful** disciples,

To 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.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO ROLL BACK THE STONE?

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.

We thank God for Jee Ah, Murray, Troy, Owen, Emma, Melanie and Amy who seek out Jesus.

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

² *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.*

³ *His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.*

⁴ *For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men.*

We remember the image of Jesus and the three disciples Peter, James and John on the Mountain during the Transfiguration in Matthew 17.

With Jesus transfigured, *"his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white."*

The disciples *"fell to the ground and were overcome by fear."* (*Ephobethesan spodra* – terrified greatly)

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"*.

(*me phobeisthe* – do not be afraid)

Now at Easter, after Jesus has risen, and with the sight of the angel, the guards fear the angel. (*phobou autou* – fear of him).

The angel's *"appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow"*.

With this description we are reminded of the transfiguration.

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

The angel says to the women *"Do not be afraid"* (*Me phobeisthe humeis* – you 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.

⁵ *But the angel said to the women,*

"Do not be afraid;

I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.

⁶ *He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.*

Come, see the place where he lay.

⁷ *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."*

⁸ *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.

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 in Jesus Christ.

9 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" (*Me phobeisthe* – do not be afraid)

¹⁰ *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 God's wonderful presence in our midst, And not to be afraid of sharing the Good News of Jesus.

No mention is now made of fear in the passage, once the two women have met the Risen Jesus and worshipped him.

We too overcome indifference and fear and any paralysis from immense 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.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ is Risen. Alleluia.

In the joy of this Eucharist, we now renew our baptismal promises.

Let us all stand as one family.

Fr Gerry

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – Easter - 16 April 2017]

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/041617.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook16042017>]