



April 2011

My dear parishioners,

Lent is passing quickly; Holy Week is just a couple of weeks away. Each year we mark so many dramatic events at this time: Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem; his poignant last meal with his friends; his trial and brutal execution. But the darkness of Good Friday leads inexorably to the glorious "Alleluia! The Lord is Risen!" of Easter Sunday. It is our annual pilgrimage into both the darkness of human existence and the life-giving light of the Resurrection.

An Easter People

Valerie Schultz, in a recent article, has this to say about Easter:

While Easter lasts one day in the secular world, we know that it is our mission to live as an Easter people. We know what it is to forgive and to be forgiven. Easter people know and are grateful for God's gifts of grace and salvation. We know that God is always close by with outstretched hands, to pick us up, dust us off, and give us another chance to do God's will. . .

Let us keep in mind that the glory of Easter's dawn leads us ever closer to the gifts of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit brings us hope and strength. In return, we are called to accept the responsibility we have to each other—to speak in a language that others understand, to listen with the heart, and to minister with kindness and joy.

The powerful wind and the holy breath of the first Pentecost filled the Apostles with faith and fortitude (Acts 2:1-4). The Holy Spirit breathes upon us in the same way all these centuries later, encouraging us to step out of safety and to go among the nations to build God's kingdom here and now. We may be led to places we never imagined ourselves going.

When we are mindful of God's presence, we will find that life is full of sacred surprises.

—Daily Reflections for Lent and Easter Week, by Valerie Schultz, Liguori Press



My prayer for you this Easter is that the light of the Resurrection will fill you once again and remain with you throughout the year. May the Risen Lord grant peace to our world and recovery from the effects of the earthquakes and tsunami on the people of Japan.

Holy Week at the Cathedral

As always, the Cathedral will mark Holy Week with many special liturgies and musical events, described below and in the Lenten brochure that I sent you last month.

First, note that several priests will be available for Confessions in the Cathedral from 11:00 a.m. until Noon on Monday of Holy Week, April 18, through Holy Saturday, April 23. The exception to that schedule is ***Tuesday of Holy Week***, April 19, which is the date of our Lenten Communal Penance Service at 12:10 p.m., *Come Home for Easter*. On that date, I will preside and preach, and after the brief service more than fifteen priests from around the Archdiocese will be available for Confessions in English, Spanish, Italian, French, German and American Sign. This is a wonderful opportunity to reconcile with the Lord and his Church in time for Easter.

Of special note during Holy Week is the annual Chrism Mass. Each year at this Mass, the priests of the Archdiocese renew their ordination promises and the Archbishop, now Cardinal, blesses the three sacred oils that will be used to anoint the sick and dying, as well as those being baptized, confirmed or ordained. The Mass will be celebrated at 7:00 p.m. on ***Monday of Holy Week***, April 18. I encourage you to attend and pray

for your priests. Our annual Tenebræ service will be held **Wednesday of Holy Week**, April 20, at 7:30 p.m. On **Holy Thursday** we will celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper twice, at 12:10 p.m. and at 5:30 p.m. Cardinal Wuerl will preside at the evening service, which will include the washing of the feet. As usual, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will be held that night until 10:00 p.m. On **Good Friday**, Rev. James A. Wiseman, O.S.B., Professor of Theology at The Catholic University of America, will deliver some Reflections on the Lord's Passion at Noon, followed by the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion at 1:00 p.m. with Cardinal Wuerl. Bishop González will preside at the Spanish Liturgy of the Passion at 4:00 p.m. We will end the night with Stations of the Cross at 7:30 p.m.

Of course, I hope many of you will be able to attend the Easter Vigil on **Holy Saturday**, April 23, the greatest feast of the Church's liturgical year, the great night on which we will welcome 15 new brothers and sisters into the Catholic community. Note that the Easter Vigil will begin at 8:00 p.m.

Again, please refer to the brochure I sent you before Lent which contains the complete schedule for Lent and Holy Week. If you have misplaced your copy, you can still pick one up in the Cathedral or view it on our website at www.stmatthewscathedral.org. I look forward to seeing you as often as you can make the time to come.

Upcoming Faith Formation Opportunities

Msgr. Peter J. Vaghi, Pastor of Church of the Little Flower in Bethesda, MD, will speak on "Friendship with God" as part of his series of monthly talks on Thursday, **May 5** at 6:00 p.m. (following the 5:30 p.m. Mass) in the East Conference Room. See www.johncarrollsociety.org for more information about The John Carroll Society, which sponsors this series.

There is still time to register for St. Matthew's five-week program for active adult Catholics who wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Preparation sessions will be held on Thursdays, **May 5, 12, 19, 26** and **June 2** from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. with a retreat on Saturday, **June 4**. We will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation on Pentecost Sunday, **June 12**. For more information or to register, please contact Heather Kinney at hkinney@stmatthewscathedral.org by Thursday, **April 28**. (*This preparation is only for those baptized Catholics who have already celebrated their First Eucharist. For others, please contact Heather Kinney to discuss the RCIA process.*)

Easter Offering and Easter Flowers

Enclosed with this letter is our Easter Flowers envelope and our Easter Offering envelope. We need your help to pay for much-needed facilities maintenance. We must re-point the front steps of the Cathedral. Cost? 16,000! There is also re-pointing needed on part of the brick on the sacristy and a section of the back of the Cathedral. Cost? \$15,000. I thank you for your ongoing generosity to the Cathedral, which makes possible all that we do here.

Thank You! Muchas Gracias!

I also thank those who contributed so generously to the Archbishop's Appeal last year, and those who already have made their gift for this year. If you have not done so, I would ask you now to consider a gift to the 2011 Cardinal's Appeal. This Appeal provides for the day-to-day needs of the least of our brothers and sisters. It also helps our seminarians and retired priests in the areas of retirement funding and long-term care. Please do what you can. They really need your help now.

Finally, Happy Easter! May this season bring you much joy, love and peace. This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson, V.F.
Rector