

A Reflection from Fr. Canisius for Easter Sunday: The Resurrection of the Lord

Dear Parishioners,

Christ Is Risen; He Is Risen indeed! Happy Easter.

What a beautiful joy we share today as we celebrate the wonderful resurrection of Jesus! I'm so thankful for each of you who has journeyed alongside us. Please know that you're always in my prayers, and I truly cherish the gift of your faith. Your willingness to share the Good News with your families and our parish community means so much. Let's keep walking together in hope! As Pope Francis beautifully reminds us in this Jubilee of Hope, we are invited to walk side by side, embracing one another with kindness, leaving no one behind, and ensuring that everyone feels included and valued.

I offer my heartfelt congratulations and warm welcomes to everyone who received the sacraments during our Easter Vigil and to all who will receive them this season. I appreciate everyone involved in preparing the candidates for the sacraments. We joyfully celebrate through light, word, and water, embracing our participation in Christ's victory.

The Resurrection is the manifestation of God's faithfulness to us. He has not forsaken us, and while suffering, sin, and death remain, the Resurrection gives meaning to it all, ensuring that death does not have the final word. When we were baptized, we shared in the fruits of Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection. The second reading today brought this to mind: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God" (Col 3:1). Through our baptism, our souls were forever changed, making us sons and daughters of God. If we are not living as sons and daughters of God, we can begin today. As we heard in the second reading, "Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col 3:2-3). Christ is Risen! What joy we have today as we celebrate Jesus's resurrection.

How have we witnessed the goodness of Christ in our lives? When have we felt his mercy and healing? How have his words given us hope and direction and transformed our lives? This is what we "see" – and like Mary Magdalene, Peter, John, and the other disciples, we are encouraged to share this with others. We are urged to give our testimony, as we are able – to be leaven that lifts others up in the power of Christ's resurrection.

Let's enthusiastically welcome the Holy Spirit's power to be at work in our Church today and within our parish community. It's an exciting time to take Jesus's gentle challenge to Mary Magdalene to heart: Don't hold on to me too tightly. Let go of those old ideas you have about me. Surrender your fears and release any despair you may carry. It's important to move away from the thought that nothing has changed because everything truly has. Let's stay open to the wonderful promptings of the Holy Spirit!

May you feel God's presence with you every step of the way!

~ *Fr. Canisius*