

+

Easter is so important that from early times Christians have celebrated the Resurrection for eight days. In ancient times the number eight was considered more than perfect, (seven being the perfect number). So, an octave of eight days was meant to convey the importance of the event. Easter celebrates the central doctrine of our faith. Only by faith do we come to accept it. Only by remaining open to Faith's continuing effect of forming us into true Christians can we find the deeper meaning of life... Faith allows us to approach the mystery of life and death in a joyful spirit. We hear Jesus say: "*Be not afraid.*" We recognize that He is present in our life, will be in our death, and in the promised resurrection. Easter's message is Christ telling us: "*Fear not! It is I.*"

+

Easter is a springtime event, celebrated with many beautiful traditions. Easter flowers brighten our churches and homes. Easter means new clothes. Easter foods are meant to remind us of a meaning beyond nourishment. Our Easter Sacraments give us renewed spirit and life for our souls. Jesus comes to bring us life in abundance.

+

Father Garrigou-Lagrange, a noted theologian in his day, reminds us that the victory of Christ over sin is far superior to His victory over death. It is the very essence of the mystery of redemption. The victory over death is only the sensible sign of the inward and invisible supernatural mystery.... The act of love of Good Friday, which is commemorated in every Mass, far surpasses the corporeal resurrection that is its manifestation. This mystery is in a sense reproduced in the Church. The Church has experienced life and death and amid the most terrible tribulations finds once again its ever-blossoming youth. The story of the Resurrection is not ended yet; it happens all around us, and in us. It is happening in you and gives you reason for joy.

+

We hear the Word of God as we read from Acts what St. Peter said on Pentecost: "*Praised be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us new birth; a birth unto hope which draws its life from the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.*" He continues: "*There is cause for rejoicing here. You may for a time have to suffer the distress of many trials; but this is so your faith, which is more precious than the passing splendor of fire-tried gold, may by its genuineness lead to praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ appears. Although you have never seen him, you love him, and without seeing him, you now believe in him, and rejoice with inexpressible joy touched with glory because you are achieving faith's goal, your salvation.*"

As we reflect on these words we come to know that Easter is truly a feastday of our faith. But we must also understand it is a feast for our hope. Jesus is our hope. He is alive. He is present to us. And finally, it is a feastday for love. For God is Love and Jesus is God. His love is everlasting. He gives it to us and we are glad. We can sing our Alleluias.

+

We are an Easter People, and so at this time of year it is customary to wish one another our very best wishes for joy and happiness. We pray for all; we remember all our departed loved ones. So, our entire Staff wishes you Easter joy. Your priests bless you:

+May Almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Happy Easter!

Monsignor Sacks, Father Krivak, and Monsignor Morrison.