



## YEAR A – EASTER SUNDAY – APRIL 12, 2020

It's Easter Sunday morning. Thanks to your prayers and the will of God, all of us in the rectory are doing fine. We hope and pray that you are too. It is a time of testing.

All our churches are still closed. Nothing like this has ever happened before. Some say God is chastising the whole human race because of our sins. That's not the God in whom I believe. Mortal sin and Venial sin are alive and well and there are consequences to all sins. But that's a subject for another time. It's Easter Sunday morning.

The church bells are still silent, but the message of Easter cannot be silenced. God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son into our world to redeem us and teach us how to love. Even death could not silence him. We killed him because we were not ready to listen. But He rose from the dead.

St. Paul tells us, "If Christ is not risen, our faith is in vain." Some people say the resurrection never happened – the whole thing is just a hoax. Several years ago, on Easter Sunday, I said to the people at Mass, "I believe with conviction that Jesus did rise from the dead. The Apostles did not believe that.

It upset some people. They said it sounds like heresy. But look closely at the words. I believe (I have faith) that Jesus rose from the dead. The apostles did not have to believe that, they witnessed the resurrection. And it is because of their witness that I am able to believe. I trust them.

They were willing to die for what they witnessed. No one dies for a hoax. Not the way they did. One of them as you know, St. Peter, was crucified upside down.

Why did Jesus come into our world, knowing that he would suffer and die on the cross? The answer is he loved us and still does. What does Jesus mean when he uses the word love? Whenever our Lord uses that word, it can be spelled C A R E. He cared more about us than he cared about himself.

Because of the virus, we can't come together in church today. We can't be with each other, sing with each other, pray with each other and share our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament with each other. But we can still remember him and what he did. That's what he asks us to do.

Wherever you are, I ask you now to use your imagination. Kids are very good at this. Think of someone you love. See their face in your mind's eye. What is their name.

Now that you are in the presence of that person, let me ask you this question, do you care more about that person than you care about yourself. If your answer is yes, then you love that person the way Jesus loves you.

Easter is all about that kind of Love. Even though we are separated now by time and space, we're still connected by that love; The love we have for God, the love we have for each other and the love God has for us.

I was going to end this reflection with a prayer, asking God to protect us from the Corona Virus. But instead, I decided to quote the words of a third-grade student who sent me an e-mail last week. Her name is Ellie. She sent me her prayer along with these words. "Dear Msgr. Sacks... It can't last forever (I can almost hear her voice). Besides God and Jesus are not in the church. They are with us." She goes on. "Please pray as often as you can. I will pray too" To that I simply say Amen.

Happy Easter Everyone!