

He is Risen and Everything is Changed!

Easter **IS** the Good News that we are to unleash in our lives, in our families and parish, and in our community. Lent was a season to prepare us for the joy of Christ's Resurrection. Consider the various ways that things are different now; consider how *Unleash the Gospel* calls us to respond to the Good News of Easter:

- **Jesus Christ is risen from the dead and is alive in the world today.** This may be harder to believe in 2018 than it was for "Doubting Thomas" in today's Gospel reading. Yet we are called to believe, and to bring others to encounter Jesus in as intimate a way as Thomas did, especially in Christ's very Body, the Eucharist. *Unleash the Gospel* calls us to live and share the joy of the Gospel and to bring healing to a secular world "... where there is widespread skepticism or misunderstanding of Catholic beliefs."
- **Jesus brings abundant Mercy into the world.** "Peace be with you," He says. As the second reading today teaches (1 John 5:1-6), the victory of faith by which Jesus conquers the world "came through water and blood." This is the Divine Mercy vision of St. Faustina we commemorated today, Mercy pouring forth from the pierced heart of Jesus. *Unleash the Gospel* holds that is essential for us to have regular encounters with Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where we receive His Mercy. Renewal begins with Mercy.
- **Jesus is bringing His Holy Spirit into the world.** We celebrate Easter until Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit. Yet the release of the Spirit begins on the Cross when Jesus breathes out His Spirit into the world (John 19:20). That continues in today's Gospel when Jesus breathed on the disciples and said "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). *Unleash the Gospel* begins with the conviction that Jesus "...is pouring out his Holy Spirit anew so that every member of the Church may be formed and sent forth as a joyful missionary disciple, so that the Gospel may be unleashed in southeast Michigan."
- After Easter, we read from in 28 chapters of the Acts of the Apostles how, guided by the Spirit, and through signs and wonders, the early Church spread the Gospel. *Unleash the Gospel* teaches that "...the story of the Church's mission continues in every age. **We are living the 29th chapter of Acts!**" We, like the early Christians, are also to boldly proclaim the Gospel "even in the face of hostility and persecution."

So, Celebrate the Resurrection.

Be at Peace. Believe.

Be bathed in the Spirit. Work wonders.

Encounter the Mercy of the Risen Lord.