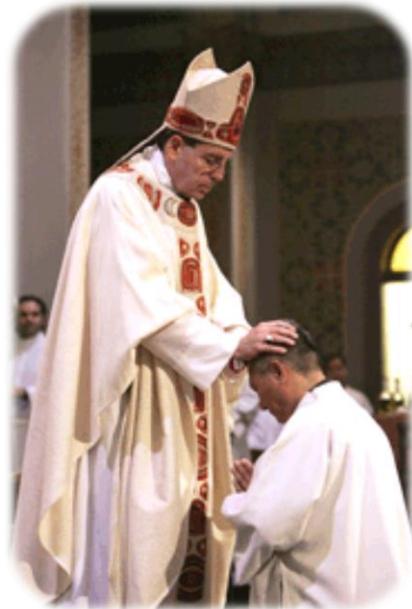


## THE FULLFILMENT OF EASTER

From the STM Bulletin, May 13, 2018

With the celebration of The Ascension of the Lord today and of Pentecost next week, the Easter season is drawing to a close. Today is a good time to reflect back on the Scripture readings from the Triduum, the Easter liturgies, and in the weeks after the Resurrection that Jesus spent with His disciples.

On Holy Thursday we celebrated Jesus establishing the priesthood, calling men to be servants to God's people (John 13:1-15; 21:17), and His institution of the Eucharist (1 Cor 11:23-26). On Good Friday, Jesus completed His eternal Sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins (Isaiah 53; Heb 4:14-16), and by His rising on Easter Sunday destroyed death itself (Col 3:1-4) through a mercy that endures forever (Ps 118). That very day Jesus began to explain all things to His disciples, as on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:25-32). The teachings He gave became the foundation of the teaching authority of the Church, established in her bishops and delegated through them to her priests (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:44-49; John 20:30; 21:25).



In the days after the Resurrection, Jesus continued to prepare the disciples to preach (Matt 28:20; Mark 16:15 & 20; Acts 10:42) and to be ministers of the Sacraments. He commissioned the Apostles to baptize all nations (Matt 28:19). He confirmed His priests in the Holy Spirit to be our confessors and gave them authority and responsibility to forgive our sins in His Name (John 20:21-23; Acts 10:43). He also promised His disciples the power to heal in His Name (Mark 16:18).

Despite all the times Jesus told His disciples to be at peace and be not afraid (Matt 28:10; Luke 24:26; John 20:19 & 26), and all His teachings about the Scriptures, and His repeated promises that an Advocate would come to help (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8), the disciples were not ready to go forth as commanded. It took the coming of Holy Spirit at Pentecost to enflame their hearts with courage before they could proclaim the Gospel, to empower them to do signs and wonders, to enlighten their minds with a full understanding of The Word, and to fully embrace their gifts and live in the Spirit.

We celebrate the Ascension when Jesus returns to the Father but leaves us His Presence in the Sacraments. We celebrate Pentecost as the "Birthday of the Church" and we remain an "Easter People" graced through the Sacraments. Let us praise God for the Resurrection, look forward to a new coming of the Holy Spirit, give thanks for the Church and the Sacraments, and pray for Msgr. Rice and all priests.

