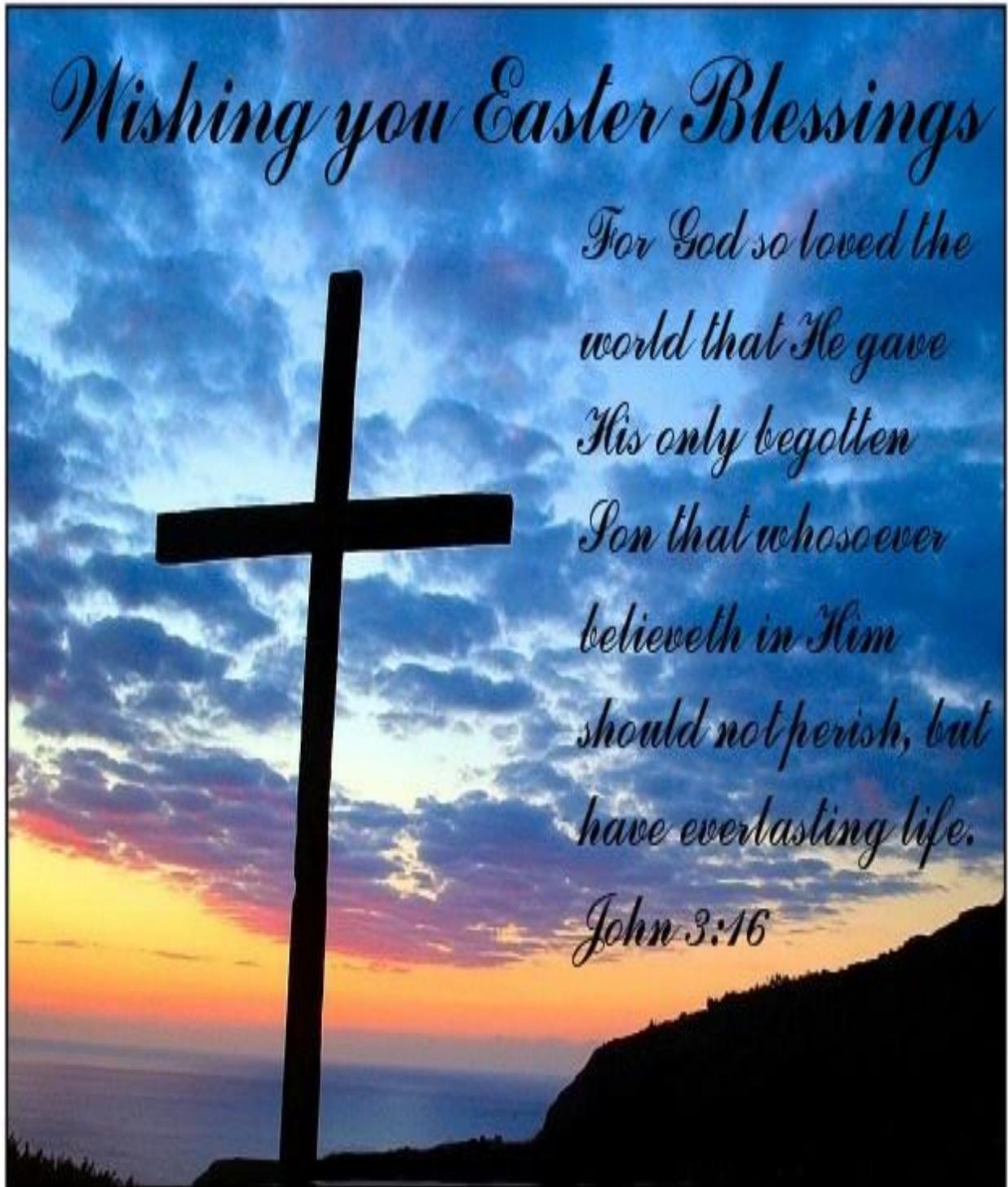


## Easter Blessing



## Holy Week & Easter Reflection

As we approach Easter, I want share with you my personal reflections on Holy Week and Easter. Easter is not only the foundation of our faith but also invigorates our hope. It is thru this Hope that we draw upward towards God. For us as Christians, it's the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the promise of eternal life.

For me, this is the holiest time of the year for each of us as Catholics. It is a time that we reflect on Holy Thursday and the Paschal Triduum, the three days commemorating the Crucifixion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

On Holy Thursday, I reflect on Our Lord celebrating the Last Supper. At the Last Supper, Jesus broke bread and wine with his disciples and for the first-time celebrated Eucharist. **(Luke 22:19-20)** "And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.'"

When I receive Eucharist, I am overcome with emotion. It reminds me of the sacrifice Christ made for all of us. How it felt for Jesus to share bread & wine with his disciples knowing that in a few short hours, he would be betrayed, denied, scourged and crucified. He was making the ultimate sacrifice for us, and thru the Eucharist, we are receiving His love for us, "Do this in remembrance of me". We recall the death and resurrection of Christ.

On Holy Thursday, there is one song which brings me to tears each and every time I hear it. It is a Dan Schutte song entitled "As I Have Done for You." This song is sung during that moment that our pastor washes the feet of 12 people from the parish to represent the 12 disciples. How humbling it must have been for the Chosen Twelve to have their feet washed by the Master and Teacher. In John 13:7-8, Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, 'Never shall you wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.'" In order to become servants of Jesus we must serve each other. Jesus is preparing to send out his disciples to be servants and spread the Good News. It is here that we are reminded that the Sacrament of Holy Orders was initiated.

For me it goes further to say that we are servants of Christ and must serve each other. It reminds us that Christ had to leave us to prepare a home for us and on the day of His return, Jesus will come to take us home with him to the place that He promised.

If you have the time, go to [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and listen to the song, "As I Have Done for You." Please take a moment to reflect on the words.

The next days of the Paschal Triduum follow on Good Friday and ends on Easter Sunday. For some, Good Friday is a day of sorrow. How can it be a good when someone is put to death? Yes, it was a sad day but I look at it in different light. I see that Jesus Christ loved us so much that his death was the perfect atoning sacrifice for sins, and that through the crucifixion, Jesus paid for our sins and washed them away and restored our right standing with God. God's mercy and grace makes salvation possible and one receives the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Holy Saturday is a day where we reflect on the time that Jesus Christ was laid in the tomb. The early Christians would light fires and pray thru the night until Easter Sunday for the coming of Jesus Christ. For me, I love the Easter Vigil Mass. Seeing the fire light the new Pascal candle and being marked with the wounds of Christ reminds me that all is not lost in the world and there is hope. Walking into a darkened church which is lightened up by

the flame from the Paschal candle is so deeply moving. "He is the light of the World and we are the flames. The bells are rung and we can rejoice and say "Alleluia!"

It is also a time to also rejoice in those who become members of our Church and able to receive the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation.

**Easter Sunday...** The day Our Lord rose from the death. **Death is defeated, New Life is offered to all.** It is a time to celebrate this new life.

I reflect on the Gospel reading of Mary and her going to the tomb to find it empty. She is saddened with grief. When she hears a man's voice, she asks were they had taken her Lord. When Jesus says her name, Mary is overcome with emotion. (John 20:16) "Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher.")

**During this Holy Week, I wish for your family many blessings. Let us rejoice in knowing that thru the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross and thru His resurrection we are Reborn! Indeed, there is eternal life in Him for us all! Alleluia!!! Alleluia!!! Alleluia!!!**

Easter Blessings,

*Lynn Springer*

Catechetical Leader

St. Patrick-St. Anthony Parish