

## The Risen Christ, an Ignatian Perspective

What does Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the patron of our Jesuit parish, have to say about the resurrection? Quite a bit! Here are four takeaways from the insights of Ignatius.

(1) Despite no biblical stories about it, Ignatius had a strong conviction that the Risen Lord would certainly have visited his mother before anyone else. According to Ignatius, after being buried in the tomb, Christ “sets free the souls of the just, then comes to the sepulcher, and rising, appears in body and soul to His Blessed Mother.”

My takeaway: Perhaps while praying the Rosary during the Easter season, I could ask Mary to reveal her own joy at seeing her son return from the dead. Perhaps I could do an imaginative prayer wherein I picture the sorrowful Mother being embraced by the Risen Christ. If I am struggling to sense the Risen Christ in my prayer these days, perhaps I could ask Mary to lead me to Him.

(2) Ignatius encourages us to reflect on Christ’s divinity, “which seemed to hide itself during the passion, now appearing and manifesting itself so miraculously in the most holy Resurrection.”

My takeaway: During Holy Week, I might have reflected on Christ’s humanity, fragility, vulnerability, and meekness. Now, in Eastertide, I could reflect on his indestructibility, his strength, and his glory. I have a Savior who cannot be destroyed or defeated. The triumphant Christ will always be with me!

(3) Ignatius believed that in praying over the Resurrection, I should, “ask for what I desire. Here it will be to ask for the grace to be glad and rejoice intensely because of the great joy and the glory of Christ our Lord.”

My takeaway: As a Catholic, I can sometimes overemphasize the suffering and sacrificial aspects of our Christian faith. Easter calls on me to pray for and strive towards gladness and joy, knowing that death, sin, and suffering will not have the last word.

(4) And finally, my favorite Resurrection insight of St. Ignatius: In praying over the Easter mysteries, I should, “Consider the office of consoler that Christ our Lord exercises, and compare it with the way in which friends are wont to console each other.” The Risen Christ recognizes that within the grieving circle of his friends, each has her or his own unique need for healing. St. Thomas needs to touch his wounds while St. Mary Magdalene needs to let go of them. The Emmaus disciples are intellectuals who need the Scriptures explained to them while St. Peter just needs a catch of fish. The Risen Christ comes to each one of his friends to console and heal them in their own unique way. Jesuits often call this gift *cura personalis*, the personal care of the individual in front of you.

My takeaway: St. Thomas was right to state boldly what exactly he needed from Christ in order to come around, “Unless I touch his wounds....” Christ rewarded him by answering his request. So what about me? Right here and now, at Eastertide of 2019, what do I need from Christ in order to experience Easter joy? Follow the lead of St. Thomas: tell Christ what it is you need and desire from him. And then trust that—in his own way and in his own time—he will answer your prayer “as friends are wont to console each other.”

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