



# MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED!

APRIL 12, 2020 / EASTER SUNDAY

## Easter Blessing!!!

I pray that the Heavenly Father and God of mercy, will assist us to no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for He is alive and has become the Lord of life. From the waters of death, God raised us with Him and renew His gift of life within us. Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ, and help us to grow as your people toward the fullness of eternal life with you. I ask this through Christ our Lord.- Amen.

## Spiritual Ponderings:

### Growing Old Gracefully Part II

Let us continue our reflections on “growing old gracefully” using Richard Johnson’s book: *A New Vision of Parish Ministry for Maturing Adults: How to Construct, Organize, and Sustain a Vibrant Faith Formation Program for the Second Half of Life*. Richard Johnson lays out 12 principals for developing a parish ministry geared towards older adults. Quotes from this book will be in bold. My reflections will be in the normal font.

**Principal #4 Parish ministry for maturing adults is based on the idea that God is calling each maturing adult in the parish to a profound vocation.**

Personal Goal #4: I will realize that I will always play an important part of God’s plan and I have an obligation to God, others, and myself that to always be the best version of myself as possible.

**Specialized vocations give new meaning to life. Many maturing adults feel a sense of meaninglessness because they’ve lost sight of their purpose. At every age and every stage, we are continuously in the throes of deconstructing previous meaning systems and constructing new meaning systems in our innermost personality functions. Spiritually maturing adults need guidance, instruction, and dialogue with others on deeper spiritual levels so they can construct the most authentic and enriching life meaning possible. A fully vibrant ministry to maturing adults can remind them of who they really are and hold up their inherent value in a new light.**

As I was reading this section of the book, my mind began to reflect to my child and teen years where so many older adults in my home parish help me grow closer to Christ. My grandmother’s fishing buddies (a group of fellow parishioners who were friends of my grandmother and went fishing together quite often) inspired me in many ways. They became people, I looked up to and wanted to be like and I could see faith was important to them. I therefore made an effort to make faith important to me. They were people who devoted a lot of their time to helping others and so I wanted to be someone who helped others. In my mother’s life, I have seen a woman who has found new life from moving from parent to grandparent. If we are alive then we are still a part of God’s plan and He still wants us to play an active role in the world today. As we grow older, we should realize that we are role models for future generations. Do they find us to be good role models? We should also ask ourselves who could I be a mentor to?

**Principal #5 Parish ministry for maturing adults shifts the focus of parish activity to a broad understanding of ministry at every level of mature adulthood: shared activities as well as shared growth in faith and life.**

Personal Goal #5: I will make sure that I remain an active member of my faith community.

**Faith formation is the process of passing the leadership of the total psycho-spiritual personality from our worldly self to our true and holy self. The faith formation process is not age or time-limited, rather it is driven by our very life course, our manifold life experience. It is the events, the full measure of our lives that offers us the spiritual curriculum we need to gradually let go of what is non-essential, and steadily turn toward the truth that sets us free. This is as true for older people as for everyone else in the parish.**

I love the image in the above quote about transferring our personality from our worldly self to our true and holy self. This is a task that I do not imagine completing on this side of the grave and so it is something I pray for the grace from God to keep working on each and every day of life.

Sometimes in life we have to make a choice to allow others to help us so that we can remain active members of the parish. Letting someone give you a ride to Church or carry something for you is not the end of the world. I hate hearing people say "I don't want to be a burden to anyone" because this is a clear sign that someone is letting their ego get in the way. It is alright to ask for help.

**Principal #6 Parish ministry for maturing adults explicitly welcomes maturing adults into mainstream ministries of the parish.**

Personal Goal #6: I will strive to be a welcoming person who points out the positive things going on in the parish and the wider Church.

**Parish ministry is marked by hospitality, which means that we must be welcoming in all aspects of parish life and experience which means that we must be welcoming in all aspects of parish life and experience: social, physical, psychological, and spiritual. Our ministry to maturing adults is also marked by hospitality, which means that we must have social events where spiritual maturing adults are encourage to mingle, mix, and have fun.**

It is important for us to never forget the power of personal invitation so as we grow older, let us never forget that we should always be inviting people to join us at Church especially Mass but also other Church social activities.

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## BREAKING OPEN THE WORD



**April 12 2020 Easter Sunday The Resurrection of the Lord Lectionary: 42 The Mass of Easter Day**

**Gospel JN 20:1-9**

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

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**Spiritual Reflection:** "Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song." - Pope John Paul II. Hallelujah means "Praise God" We are praising the winner of the battle between Life and Death.

**Spiritual Questions**

1. Does the way I live my life proclaim the Good News of the Resurrection?
2. Have I ever really faced the darkness of the empty tomb?
3. Do I keep a prayerful vigil during times God feels absence?
4. How will I live my life today in order to bring people to a deeper faith?
5. What does the word "Alleluia" mean to you?



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*Thought of the Day*

<b>Sunday</b>	The great gift of Easter is hope - Christian hope which makes us have that confidence in God, in his ultimate triumph, and in his goodness and love, which nothing can shake. - Basil Hume
<b>Monday</b>	And he departed from our sight that we might return to our hearts and find him there. For he left us, and behold, he is here. - Saint Augustine
<b>Tuesday</b>	Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song. - Pope John Paul II
<b>Wednesday</b>	Look at the cross and you will know what one soul means to Jesus. - Mother Teresa
<b>Thursday</b>	Good Friday and Easter free us to think about other things far beyond our own personal fate, about the ultimate meaning of all life, suffering, and events; and we lay hold of a great hope. - Dietrich Bonhoeffer
<b>Friday</b>	Death is strong, but Life is stronger. - Phillips Brooks
<b>Saturday</b>	Easter was when Hope in person surprised the whole world by coming forward from the future into the present. - N. T. Wright

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## PRO-LIFE



April 2020

We pray to you Lord who loves justice and righteousness may be the strength and guiding light of world leaders so all life may be considered sacred and all people may walk in the ways of life and peace. We implore you Lord.

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For all who have given into the temptation and doubt that the Lord may strengthen them and may enable us to assist them as they face the trials of their faith journey. May they come to know the Lord's mercy. - Amen



## St. Monica Society

*Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.*

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## Catholic Prayers

### LITANY FOR THE EASTER SEASON

Father of life, we give you praise and glory. - Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 You have given Jesus victory over sin. - Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 You have raised him from the dead. - Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 You have made his cross a sign of glory. - Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 You have made us sharers in your life. - Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 With Christ, you have buried us in death to sin. - Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 With him you have raised us to new life. = Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 He is seated with you in glory. - Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 He sends his Spirit to guide our lives. - Christ is risen, alleluia!  
 Jesus will come again in glory. - Christ is risen, alleluia!



# Humor

An elderly couple both arrive at the pearly gates together and meet Saint Peter, who says "Let me show you around" He pointed to a mansion and said "That will be your house, located next to the country club."

The old man asks, "and how much will that cost?" St Peter replies, "oh there's no charges, it's free, you're in heaven". He adds, "the country club has no fees or costs either" The old man is really happy by now and asks about food. St Peter says, "Although you don't need to eat, we do have full buffets with the very best pork, beef and poultry"

The old man asks, "Aren't those bad for our health?" St Peter assures him, "You're in heaven now, there is no need to worry about your health."

The old man turns to his wife and smacks her upside the head. She says, "What was THAT for?" He answers, "If it wasn't for you and your bran muffins, we could have been here 30 years ago!"