



Fr. Raphael's Commentary and Homily on Easter 2020

Please read John's Gospel for Easter Mass. It is John 20: 1 – 9

Father's Commentary on the Gospel reading:

Note in the Gospel that the head covering was rolled up and put on a shelf. Many times, when we attend and share a meal and stories in a restaurant, we excuse ourselves to use the facilities, or go to the bar for a drink. The waiter comes to our table, folds up the napkin, and puts it there for us, because he knows we're coming back. The napkin placed off to the side in the scriptures is a sure sign that Jesus will return, claim us as His own, and bring us to eternal life.

Father's Homily

Blessed Easter, fellow travelers, during this time – the pain, the scourge, the nails, the jeers, the vinegar, and the gall. The humiliation and, perhaps worse, the bitterness of a betrayer's kiss, are all past. But before the dawn of Easter, doom prevailed, and all seemed mournful.

The Church, in today's Gospel, ushers us into the garden to behold an empty tomb – silent proof that Christ is risen, and more, that God has set that seal for all the sons and daughters who follow in the way of Christ Jesus. No longer is the cross the symbol of Christian faith. It is really an empty tomb.

This is our hope. Women on their way, as the Gospel tells us, worry about that single stone that seals the view of Christ. They press on, in confidence, to find the stone has been rolled back. Today, many troubles weigh like stone blocking the entrance of Christian joy, and the awareness that we live redeemed. Stones of selfishness seal us off from Christ. We pray He roll them back, to reveal the image of God within all of us. We plead for perseverance as we truthfully make our way toward our own eternal Easter morn. With gratitude – deep gratitude – we rejoice that Christ is risen! And joyfully, we give thanks for the precious gift of faith that brings purpose and peace to our uncertainty, as we live our vocation as children of God in this world.

In our American Constitution we talk of our right to life. Our rights are symbolized in a great cracked bell, now silent, that proclaims liberty. By divine generosity, we are invited to eternal life. Today the trophy of His promise – and the symbol of spiritual life itself – is a cracked tomb, whose emptiness proclaims that Christ has risen, and so will we!

The life and liberty symbolized by the liberty bell were inspired by the spirit of 1776. The Spirit who inspires us is the spiritual life we share in the Holy Spirit. His numeral is infinity. We pray that we will respond to His inspirations and lead us to our own Resurrection day!

Finally, don't be like the crocus. The crocus bursts ripe into the Easter season and withers quickly in the summer heat. Don't you, in the brightness of this Easter morn, wither in the living of your Christian commitment. May this joyous season of Easter fill you and your family, and all its members, fill you at peace with God and one another.

May the Son of God who rose from the dead bless you. May the Holy Spirit inspire you, so that on the day appointed by God the Father, you may enter the joy of His eternal kingdom, faithfully following His Son.

I wish you all a deep, abiding peace – an Easter peace – in assurance that we are walking with Christ and will, as well, rise with him.

God bless you! Happy Easter!

Father Raphael

