

From the Pastor—April 28, 2019

Easter Blessings! I hope your Easter celebration has been filled with many blessings. Remember, the Easter season lasts 50 days compared to the 40 days of Lent. To fulfill your “Easter Duty” of receiving Holy Communion at least once/year (the bare minimum as stated in Church law), you can receive Jesus in the Eucharist up through the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, which occurs this year on June 16th. A worthy reception of Our Lord in Holy Communion more than likely includes making a good Confession. *** I estimated the following for our Mass attendance at the three Easter Masses: Easter Vigil at St. Mary’s—60; Easter Sunday at St. Mary’s—240; Easter Sunday at St. Joseph’s—50. *** At the Easter Vigil, Alyse Andreasen was received into full communion of the Catholic Church by making a Profession of Faith. She received her First Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation. Alyse and her fiancé, Michael Pflanz, will be married at St. Mary’s in June. Alyse is a native of Genoa where her parents raised her in a vibrant Lutheran community. *** Also at the Easter Vigil, Charles DeWar received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Charles was baptized Catholic as an infant, but was not confirmed as a youth. He now has received the three sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion. *** To be with all of you as your pastor and celebrate the Easter mysteries was a true joy. Your prayers and attentiveness to the details of each celebration were edifying to me more than you know. Please know of my thankfulness to all of you who made our church interiors and exteriors of St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s beautiful and prepared for these celebrations of faith. Thank you to all musicians, those men whose foot I washed, and to the readers, Acolytes, and servers.

Lent’s Over...Now What? The Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy, published in 2002, states the following in paragraphs 148 and 149:

148. Easter Sunday, the greatest solemnity in the liturgical year, is often associated with many displays of popular piety: these are all cultic expressions which proclaim the new and glorious condition of the risen Christ, and the divine power released from his triumph over sin and death.

149. Popular piety intuits a constancy in the relationship between Christ and his mother. The liturgical affirmation that God replenished the Blessed Virgin Mary with joy in the resurrection of her Son, has been translated and represented, so as to speak, in the pious exercise of the meeting of the Risen Christ with His Mother: on Easter morning two processions, one bearing the image of Our Lady of Dolours, the other that of the Risen Christ, meet each other so as to show that Our Lady was the first, and full participant in the mystery of the Lord’s resurrection.

Easter Table Blessing *(from the above document)*

150. The Easter liturgy is permeated by a sense of newness: nature has been renewed, since Easter coincides with Spring in the Northern hemisphere; fire and water have been renewed; Christian hearts have been renewed through the Sacrament of Penance, and, where possible, through administration of the Sacraments of Christian initiation; the Eucharist is renewed, so as to speak: these are signs and sign-realities of the new life begun by Christ in the resurrection. Among the pious exercises connected with Easter Sunday, mention must be made of the traditional blessing of eggs, the symbol of life, and the blessing of the family table; this latter, which is a daily habit in many Christian families that should be encouraged, is particularly important on Easter Sunday: the head of the household or some other

member of the household, blesses the festive meal with Easter water which is brought by the faithful from the Easter Vigil.

Annual House Blessing A tremendous grace given by priests any time of year is especially to be encouraged at Easter time. This is the blessing of the family in their home. The Directory explains the blessing in this way:

152. The annual blessing of families takes place in their homes during Eastertide - or at other times of the year. This pastoral practice is highly recommended to parish priests and to their assistant priests since it is greatly appreciated by the faithful and affords a precious occasion to recollect God’s constant presence among Christian families. It is also an opportunity to invite the faithful to live according to the Gospel, and to exhort parents and children to preserve and promote the mystery of being "a domestic church".

Parking Lot Our St. Mary’s parking lot has been in need of cracks being filled in. A contractor from Geneva was able to perform the repairs on Easter Monday. Additionally, an anonymous parishioner donated toward filling in a large spot, approximately 3’ x 10’, located south of the rectory living room. The repair of the cracks totaled \$1,250; the large hole was \$250. Thank you for our generous contributors who make these projects possible.

Divine Mercy Sunday Jesus revealed His message of Divine Mercy to St. Faustina during the 1930’s in Poland. It is not as if Jesus was not offering His mercy prior to that time, but his revelations to the saint indicate the greater awareness that He desires us to have for His mercy. If you have seen the Unplanned movie about Abby Johnson, she was a recent speaker at the Divine Mercy conference in the Bronx, NY. If she, who by her self-admonition was complicit in 22,000 abortions (including two of her own children), can speak about receiving the Divine Mercy of Jesus, then any of us can count ourselves to be similarly needful of the Lord’s outpouring, or ocean, of graces the Lord promised on Divine Mercy Sunday. The main disposition to receive this ocean of mercy is to receive Holy Communion worthily on that day (or the Vigil Mass the day before), by making a good confession in preparation, and living in such a way that you remain in the state of grace to be able to receive that Holy Communion with great trust in His Divine Mercy. The Confession need not be made on the day of Divine Mercy; St. Faustina herself made her Confession a day beforehand as Confessions offered on Sundays were not common in her time. Through the promise to grant complete forgiveness of sins and punishment on the Feast of Mercy, our Lord emphasizes the value of Confession and Communion as miracles of mercy.

Cast Your Net Next weekend, we will begin our 2019 Charity and Stewardship Appeal in St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s. If you wish to make a down payment, or payment in full, please bring your checkbook and sign your pledge card after Mass.

God Bless You!

Father Grell