

## From the Pastor—April 18, 2021

**The Gospels' Resurrection Accounts** The four Gospel writers proclaim the Resurrection of Jesus from their own viewpoints. I think it's important to read each Gospel with a view to its uniqueness. Here are some highlights in how Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John report the Lord's rising from the dead on the third day.

**Matthew** Matthew's account of the earthquake accompanying the angel from heaven is startling. He reports that with the earthquake, an angel descended from heaven, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. This is really cool imagery; Matthew is the only Gospel to mention an earthquake. The Roman guards at the tomb collapsed into shock, or like "dead men". Apparently, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary witnessed the whole thing; they were told by the angel, "Do not be afraid!" As the women were heading back to the other disciples to tell them the stunning news, Jesus met them. They embraced his feet and worshiped him. St. Matthew also gives the detail that the chief priests and elders gave the Roman guards money in bribery so that they reported that the body of Jesus had been stolen. Matthew is the only evangelist who tells us of other dead people being raised with Jesus. Read chapter 27: 52-53 for this curious detail.

**Mark** Mark, the shortest of the Gospels, moves rapidly from the Resurrection to the Ascension in only 20 verses. He refers to the heavenly messenger not as an angel but as a "young man". The young man is found sitting inside the tomb of Jesus, to the right side, and clothed in a white robe. Instead of saying "do not be afraid," he said, "Do not be amazed!" Mark identifies the other Mary as the mother of James and adds that a third woman named Salome was also present at the tomb. St. Mark tells us that the Eleven Apostles did not believe the report of Mary Magdalene that Jesus had risen, nor did they believe the two disciples who encountered Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Mark says they were walking to the country without naming a town.)

**Luke** In Luke's account, three women encounter "two men", presumably angels. The three women are Mary Magdalene, Joanna (who is mentioned earlier in Luke's Gospel), and Mary the mother of James. Peter and the others don't believe what the women tell them, but Peter runs to the tomb and sees it is empty...and was amazed. The Gospel of Luke tells how the risen Jesus accompanied the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Jesus opened the Scriptures for them and they felt their hearts burning within them. They only recognized him upon reaching their destination, in the breaking of the bread. Jesus then appeared to the eleven apostles and ate a piece of baked fish to show he was not a ghost.

**John** John reports most extensively on the Resurrection, with 55 verses spread over two chapters. Mary of Magdala is the first to discover the empty tomb, which John reports as her having seen the stone rolled away. She ran (not walked) and told the disciples the amazing news. Peter and John then ran (not walked) to the empty tomb; but only John, the beloved disciple, believed what has happened. Mary Magdalene stayed outside the tomb after Peter and John departed. She saw two angels, dressed in white, and asked them where the body of Jesus was taken. Then she turned around and saw Jesus, who she thought was the gardener. Jesus said, "Mary" and she recognized him. St. John's Gospel is the only one to tell of Thomas' absence when Jesus first appeared to the Apostles, and the only one

to tell of Jesus standing along the seashore while 7 of the 11 disciples were fishing.

**First Holy Communion, St. Mary's** Our Mass for our 14 Holy Communicants was beautiful! Receiving Jesus for the first time was a wonderful experience for this class, composed of nine girls and five boys. I appreciated Father Rafael Rodriguez from the Seward seminary offering the 10:45 Mass at St. Joseph's in my place.

**Divine Mercy** We had a wonderful holy hour to celebrate Jesus' mercy...Jesus, we trust in You! Plan now for Divine Mercy Sunday, 2022, and truly enter into Jesus' promises to St. Faustina by going to Confession and receiving Holy Communion. I encourage you to recite the Divine Mercy chaplet daily. The beauty of the Lord's mercy is something that I pray we can all understand better, year-by-year, and come to a greater devotion to Our Lord and his mercy for us.

**Pope Emeritus Benedict Birthday** You may have heard that Pope Benedict XVI turned 94 on Friday, April 16. He has now spent more years as the retired pope than he did as the reigning pope. He had some health troubles last summer, around the time his brother, Msgr. Georg Ratzinger, passed away. But he is apparently in good health and good spirits. He has reportedly lost the strength of his voice, which was always rather wispy as a matter of his nature. Pope Emeritus Benedict lives in a former monastery near the Vatican, and he prays for the Church each day in his Masses and Liturgy of the Hours.

**What I am Reading** The previous note leads into this one: I am reading right now a biography on the life of Joseph Ratzinger/Pope Benedict XVI. It is considered the official biography, written by journalist Peter Seewald. I am reading volume 1, with the second volume expected to be released later this year. It is quite a good read.

**Father Kapaun's Remains** A priest from the Diocese of Wichita who died in Korea during the war there has recently been identified through scientific research into his formerly anonymous remains. Father Emil Kapaun died in 1951 while serving as a U.S. Army chaplain. He grew up in tiny Pilsen, Kansas, which is about an hour north of Wichita. Father Kapaun, until this year, had his remains in a tomb of unknowns, thought to never be identified. But much as we have heard of those who died at Pearl Harbor being identified through modern technology, Father Kapaun has been identified as well. His remains will come back to Kansas, where he has nieces, nephews, and cousins still living, and he will be buried in the cathedral of Wichita. His cause for canonization is ongoing. A pole vaulter from Hutchison, Kansas, suffered a serious injury at a track meet some 10 years ago, and miraculously (after prayer to Father Kapaun's intercession) walked out of the hospital shortly after the injury. Some see this as a verifiable miracle for Father Kapaun's cause.

Please know of my Easter prayers for all of you!

**God Bless You!!!**

**Father Grell**