

JOYFUL JOURNAL



April 2016

Alleluia! He is Risen Indeed!

—Dorothy Burns, Director of Religious Education, CTR Catholic

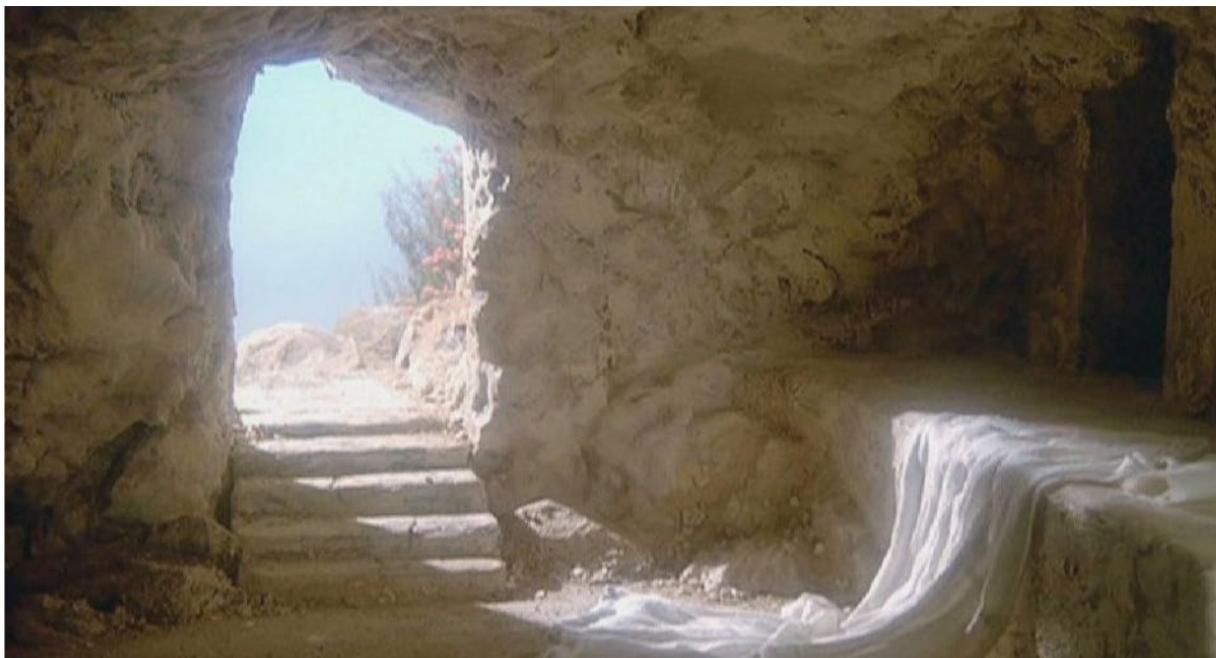
“... this man handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. .. This Jesus, God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses. ... Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.” (Acts 2: 23, 24, 32, 36).

The first sermon of the first pope after being set on fire by the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. This is the original kerygma of the Gospel: the Good News.

What lessons can we learn from the resurrection?

First, this world is not it. The natural world that we have come to know through our senses and ordinary experience is not the final framework of our lives and activities. From a materialistic perspective it appears that everything comes into existence and then fades away permanently.

“But what if this is not in fact the case? What if the laws of nature are not as iron-clad as we thought? What if death and dissolution did not have the final say? What if, through God’s power and according to his providence, a “new heaven and a new earth” were being born? The resurrection of Jesus from the dead shows as definitively as possible that God is up to something greater than we had imagined or thought possible. And therefore we don’t have to live as



though death were our master and as though nihilism were the only coherent point of view. After he had encountered the risen Christ, Paul could even taunt death: “Where is your sting?” In light of the resurrection, we can, in fact, begin to see this world as a place of gestation, growth and maturation toward something higher, more permanent, more splendid.” (Bishop Robert Barron of Los Angeles)

Lesson two: The tyrants know their days are numbered. “The threat of violence is how tyrants up and down the centuries have always asserted their authority. Might makes right.... Jesus had taken the worst that the world could throw at him and he returned, alive and triumphant.” (Ibid) In modern times we have the example of St. John Paul, who had the power of the resurrection. In communist Poland without nuclear weapons, tanks or mighty armies this power proved strong enough “to bring down one of the most imposing empires in the history of the world.” (Ibid). If the resurrection is merely a subjective event

or a mere symbol it poses no threat to the tyrants of the world.

Lesson three: The path of salvation has been opened to everyone. Jesus went as far away from the Father as you can go, journeying all the way down into pain, despair, alienation, even godforsakenness. No matter how fast or far we run from the Father, we are running into the arms of the Son. Jesus said, “When the Son of Man is lifted up, he will draw all people to himself”. Everyone now has free access to the divine mercy.

Mere mortals fear death, but what if death no longer had any power over us? What if God knows that our greatest fear is death and He wants us to trust Him enough to get over this greatest fear? “Let us not domesticate the still stunning and disturbing message of the resurrection. Rather, let us allow it to unnerve us, change us, set us on fire.”

Adapted from The Disturbing Fact of the Resurrection by Bishop Robert Barron, March 24, 2016

The Joy of the Gospel

(wise words from Pope Francis)

“Urbi et Orbi”
Easter 2016

The Church throughout the world echoes the angel's message to the women: “Do not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised... Come, see the place where he lay” (Mt 28:5-6).

This is the culmination of the Gospel, it is the Good News par excellence: Jesus, who was crucified, is risen! This event is the basis of our faith and our hope. If Christ were not raised, Christianity would lose its very meaning; the whole mission of the Church would lose its impulse, for this is the point from which it first set out and continues to set out ever anew. The message which Christians bring to the world is this: Jesus, Love incarnate, died on the cross for our sins, but God the Father raised him and made him the Lord of life and death. In Jesus, love has triumphed over hatred, mercy over sinfulness, goodness over evil, truth over falsehood, life over death.

That is why we tell everyone: “Come and see!” In every human situation, marked by frailty, sin and death, the Good News is no mere matter of words, but a testimony to unconditional and faithful love: it is about leaving ourselves behind and encountering others, being close to those crushed by life's troubles, sharing with the needy, standing at the side of the sick, elderly and the outcast... “Come and see!”: Love is more powerful, love gives life, love makes hope blossom in the wilderness.

From “Easter Message from Pope Francis” by SHARONSWORD-SOFTRUTH, March 28, 2016.

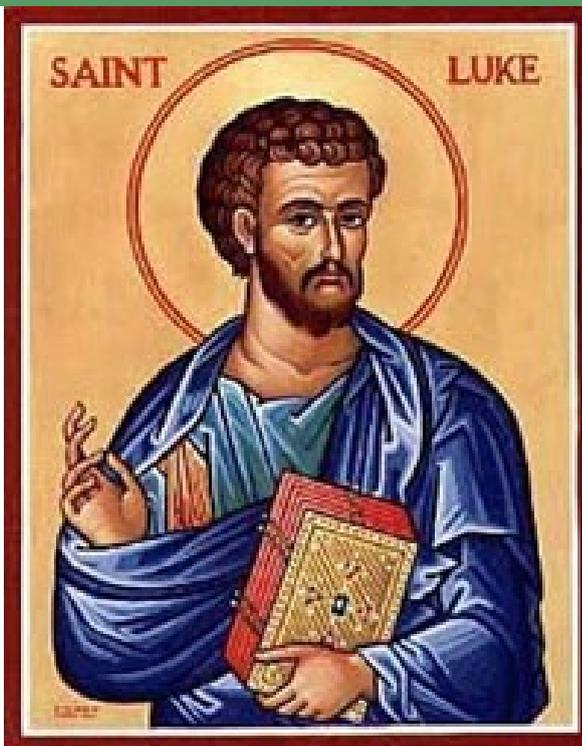
Gospel of Luke...

by Tomas Rochford,
Holy Cross Collegiate

During the Easter season none of the Sunday Gospel readings come from the Gospel of Luke but from John's Gospel.

Second Sunday of Eastertide (Divine Mercy Sunday) – Gospel Reading from St. John

“Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing.” Doubting Thomas, the Apostolic band's scientist, had declined to believe stories about Our Lord's resurrection without evidence from his senses. Perhaps some of us, formed as we are in an empirical-technological age, have similar doubts. We are comfortable believing in a distant God, Force, or Ultimate Reality that creates or shapes the universe; such a deity might be needed to undergird the rational order discovered by the scientific method. But can we seriously believe that the Creator of the Universe took on flesh and became a particular man, of a particular historical period, on this very small and insignificant planet? Yet even if our credulity might be stretched this far, could scientifically-minded people be expected to go even further? Can we really be asked to believe in a God who humbles Himself so much that He is treated like a slave by His own creatures – a God who suffers and dies at the hands of those whom He loves? Simply, yes. For it is this very God, a scandal to many in His day and ours, who rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, conquering humanity's two great enemies: sin and



death. How great is Our Lord's mercy and love, that He would sacrifice Himself to offer us everlasting happiness and freedom! How should we, infinite and joyful debtors to Our Merciful Lord, respond? There are no better words than those of St. Thomas himself: “My Lord and my God!” Let us make his act of faith our own when we reflect on the abundant gifts of the Father; most especially when we gaze at Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist at Mass or in Adoration.

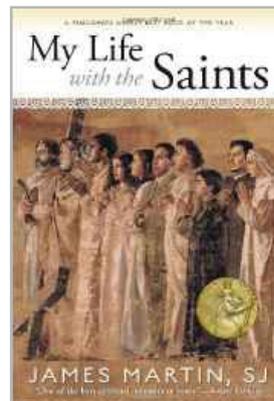
DISCIPULA UNITAE IN FIDE

My Life with the Saints

By Melanie Fricot
Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy
[My Life with the Saints](#), by James Martin is a wonderful combination of humorous memoir and non-fiction literature. Each chapter weaves back and forth between the history of one saint, and how this saint has influenced Martin's own life. I found that I learned a lot about a wide variety of saints, from well-known saints like Francis and Bernadette, to lesser known saints like Pedro Arrupe and the Ugandan Martyrs; particularly as Martin focuses on what aspect of each saint has been particularly relevant to his life.

Martin writes about his life in a very candid manner. He

describes how his decision to leave a life in business to become a Jesuit priest astonished those around him. He relates several entertaining stories from his time in the seminary – how shocked he was doing street ministry, to how shocked the other seminarians were that he didn't even know who Saint Bernadette was! And he describes his personal physical struggle with writing, as his body won't let him type more than half an hour a day without significant



pain. For each of his triumphs and struggles he connects the story of a saint, and how he has used their inspiration and intercession to persevere.

Given Martin's physical hardship with the process of typing, I am very glad he persevered to write this entertaining and informative book.

I would highly recommend it to anyone who is interested in learning more about the saints, or about the personal story of a highly entertaining priest.

Important Liturgical Dates



- April 2 – anniversary of the death of Saint John Paul II (2005)
- April 3 – Second Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy Sunday
- April 4 – The Annunciation of the Lord
- April 7 – St. John Baptist de la Salle, priest, Religious Founder, Educator
- April 10 – Third Sunday of Easter
- April 11 – St. Stanislaus, Bishop, martyr
- April 17 – Fourth Sunday of Easter and World Day of Prayer for Vocations
- April 24 – Fifth Sunday of Easter
- April 25 – St. Mark, Evangelist
- April 29 – St. Catherine of Siena, Doctor of the Church



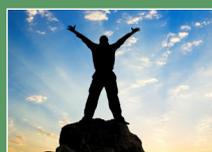
Know YOUR FAITH

The difference between Christ's resurrection and resuscitation:

#645 By means of touch and the sharing of a meal, the risen Jesus establishes direct contact with his disciples. He invites them in this way to recognize that he is not a ghost and above all to verify that the risen body in which he appears to them is the same body that had been tortured and crucified, for it still bears the traces of his Passion. Yet at the same time this authentic, real body possesses the new properties of a glorious body: not limited by space and time but able to be present how and when he wills; for Christ's humanity can no longer be confined to earth, and belongs henceforth only to the Father's divine realm. For this reason too the risen Jesus enjoys the sovereign freedom of appearing as he wishes: in the guise of a gardener or in other forms familiar to his disciples, precisely to awaken their faith.

#646 Christ's Resurrection was not a return to earthly life, as was the case with the raisings from the dead that he had performed before Easter: Jairus' daughter, the young man of Nain, Lazarus. These actions were miraculous events, but the persons miraculously raised returned by Jesus' power to ordinary earthly life. At some particular moment they would die again. Christ's Resurrection is essentially different. In his risen body he passes from the state of death to another life beyond time and space. At Jesus' Resurrection his body is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit: he shares the divine life in his glorious state, so that St. Paul can say that Christ is "the man of heaven".

Catechism of the Catholic Church



Live YOUR FAITH

...When people behave in ways that seem unreasonable to us, we call them fools. And what is reasonable in this world? Not letting anyone "take advantage" of us. Putting ourselves first. Letting God have second place, or third, or whatever spot is available after we've taken care of priorities that include making a comfortable living and earning praise and honor for accomplishments....

So, when we give money to the homeless person, we are called fools. Jesus said to give alms to the poor. He didn't say to make certain they spent that money well

Modern activists try to incite, tossing angry rhetoric and employing bullying tactics to achieve the goal. Fools speak the truth with love.

Secular society pushes to eliminate any human life they deem inconvenient through abortion or euthanasia. Fools respect the dignity of every human being.

Governments create welfare policies that enslave the poor in a cycle of poverty with no way out. Fools give freely knowing that everything belongs to God.

A fool for Christ turns his or her back on the secular standards of the moment and acts in the name of Jesus regardless of difficulties, embarrassment, or cost, because we know there is a better world waiting for those who follow His commandments. Are you a fool for Christ?

Excerpts from <http://newevangelizers.com/blog/2016/04/01/fool-christ/> by Jacqueline Vick, 2016



Share YOUR FAITH

Here are some suggestions for tapping into the "triggers" of people's lives – those things in the front of their minds – and using them as a connecting bridge to the nearness of God

- Ask people how they are doing, and then really wait for an answer.
- Listen attentively to others and inquire about their experiences, circumstances, joys, and challenges.
- Get out of your comfort zone, and venture into the "zones" of others.
- Invite people into your "zones."
- Pay special attention to people experiencing a "disturbance" in life and tell them you will pray for them.
- Make a habit of seeking the counsel of others so that you become more adept at offering counsel to those who seek you out.
- Get in the habit of verbally expressing gratitude for the ordinary things in your life.
- Make a habit of offering a few brief supportive comments to friends on social media who post about challenges they're facing.
- Make a habit of "liking" posts from social media friends when they share an experience of joy.
- Get caught doing menial tasks with humility and even wonder.
- Help people to succeed at their tasks and to advance themselves in work or creative endeavors.
- Recognize, affirm, and encourage the gifts of others.

Under the Influence of Jesus by Joe Poprocki

Close Encounters of the Christ kind

(in word, sacraments, and others)

By Lindsay Fagan, Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy

As a Vincentian, I love reflecting on the quote from St. Vincent de Paul that reads, "The poor have much to teach you. You have much to learn from them". When we share in the life and goals of those who are poor, we discover the presence of the Holy Spirit who renews us. As we speak with them, listen to them, and accompany them as the agents of their own liberation, we allow ourselves to be evangelized by them—we are inspired and humbled by their faith and hope in God under the worst circumstances.

On Tuesday, March 15th, OLS students had the opportunity to partake in a "Day in the Life Experience" through The Mustard Seed. Our day began with a guest panel where we learned the story of a gentleman, a man who once had it all and lost everything. The next two hours were spent completing a series of challenges on the streets of Calgary wherein we experienced a mere fraction of what it might be like to walk in the shoes of someone experiencing homelessness. Students sat in the plus 15's, collected enough bottles to earn \$2.00 (most groups were unsuccessful), accessed various

social services to solve issues pertaining to the profiles we were given, visited Alpha House and the Salvation Army, and made a point to look into the eyes of each person experiencing homelessness to smile in an effort to remind them that they are NOT invisible.

As we were walking back to The Mustard Seed, I glanced behind me and was taken aback when I discovered that my students had stopped to empty their backpacks of all their

food and water to a man who was so incredibly desperate for nourishment. I turned back and walked over to where they were all gathered and marveled at the look on this man's face as he relished in their act of kindness. His departing words, "God bless you!" continue to resonate with me to this very day. In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, I challenge you to look for opportunities to encounter Christ in those who are less fortunate.

There's An App for That!

Words with Jesus Android

This tiny little app is full to the brim of the Words of Jesus. Each day of the year has a single bible verse with only the words of Jesus. This is an app that is designed to give you the gift of prayer in a very short amount of time. Below Jesus' words is a one or two sentence meditation to give you a starting point in your meditation for the day. The church teaches that the Words of Jesus are life, and speaking them and reading them every day can really put you into a position of prayer.

The "Words with Jesus" app is a great solution. You can set a daily reminder, which is really helpful.

Other features include:

- Short Scriptures featuring the Words of Jesus
- Brief Reflection (and I do mean brief)
- Links to share on Social Network
- Link to online Bible Full Review: <https://catholicapps.com/words-with-jesus-app>

Joyful Moments

Please share with us your "Joyful" moments through your own school's faith journey.
Send your stories and pictures to joyfuljourney@redeemer.ab.ca

Living a life through faith and love!

Written by Allison Foley, Grade 12 Holy Trinity Academy

Over the past 10 years, students of Holy Trinity have been privileged to travel to Cristo Rey, Costa Rica on a faith mission. The group of students and teachers work alongside with Asociación Obras del Espíritu Santo which is founded by a local priest who is devoted to bringing God's love and faith to the poor. This priest has transformed this community tremendously by connecting the people through the church. Throughout the years, he has built women's and children's shelters, daycares, and schools around the country. Travelling down on Easter break, we are invited to participate in Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, Sunday Mass and a procession where we parade through the streets of San Jose. With their Tico culture, the church is filled with love and joy, singing and dancing, and lots of hugs.

Personally, this is my second time travelling back to Costa Rica. One of the most shocking truths I found was just how little some of these people had. Walking through the streets, there was metal sheets nailed together, with cut-outs serving as windows and doors. Dirt surrounded the inside of these shacks. Yet, these people's hearts were filled with such joy as they rely solely on their faith to provide them with food for the next week. These people have nothing, but they live a life that proves they have everything through their faith and love.

