## March 31, 2024

Dear Friends,



**CHRIST IS ALLVE!** God's blessings as we celebrate the Sacred Triduum and Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord! On behalf of our entire staff, we wish you and yours the best Easter, filled with hope for the future! May alleluias ring out our joy in the very essence of our faith – the resurrection of the Lord! Alleluia!

Here are some thoughts about the meaning of Easter and its powerful message for our lives:

**EASTER SUNDAY—CYCLE B FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT** Texts: Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-9

**Brothers and sisters, Christ is risen! Alleluia!** The long journey of Lent that ended with death's silence on Good Friday is over. Our Lord Jesus Christ is risen from death's cold embrace. He rises from the tomb into the very life of God, life eternal, transformed life in a glory that is nothing less than holy love. The Church's universal – 'catholic' – story through all ages is because Christ lives, we shall live both now and always.

There is, however, a small detail in the Easter story that only John seems to remember. The other gospel writers – Matthew, Mark, and Luke – all report that the women who came to the tomb that first Easter arrived at the scene as the sun was piercing the eastern sky. This is very clear, with no ambiguity. Writes Matthew, "as the first day of the week was dawning." Mark notes, "very early on the first day of the week, as the sun was rising." Luke echoes this same line: "on the first day of the week, at early dawn."

**It's a small detail, but the first three gospels agree**: the women discovered the empty tomb in the light of Easter's dawn. Only John demurs. Listen again. Listen carefully. "Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed." Did you hear it? "*While it was still dark*"; that's the small, fascinating detail from John that has my imagination this Easter day. Why the difference? What is John telling us in this "still dark" line that is worth this handful of minutes on such a wonderful resurrection day?

To answer that question, we must remember that night and darkness color the canvas of John's Gospel. In chapter three, Nicodemus comes to visit our Lord "at night." And then, in the darkest of nights, Judas leaves the upper room to betray Jesus. At that moment, John simply reported, "And it was night." John is telling us the dark of night is the space in a day's 24 hours of time that speaks most of our confusing, broken, and lost human condition.

"While it was still dark...." With the landscape so opaque we can hardly find our way, John reports something profound; a truth about ourselves and God's work in our midst only Easter can address. What if this little dark detail is reminding us of the place where all of us begin the Easter celebration? What if every one of us is Mary Magdalene, groping our way toward an elusive hope that Christ indeed lives, that death is vanquished, that life triumphs? What if that is exactly what John wants us to hear this morning?

With trembling lips and a pounding heart, that is where all of us begin this day of days. In fact, we cannot fully, dare I say authentically, celebrate the resurrection of our Lord if we do 13 not begin "while it is still dark." Why? Because that is precisely where God begins the gospel story. The scriptures speak with one voice from Genesis to Revelation that God's gift of life and love come to the human family lost in a darkened night of our own making. From Adam and Eve's willful choice to David's shameful adultery to the disciples' thoughtless selfishness, we of the human species find ourselves on a darkened stage hungry for light.

**This was the message of Lent these last 40 days**. We took the Lenten journey in many respects feeling our way through thick darkness. Confession, penance, and renewal have seasoned a shadowed journey to this Easter morning. Just as we plant a seed in the dark, moist womb of the earth in the hope of seeing a plant pierce the ground's crust, so our lives must go to the place where we admit that darkness and death are our lot until Easter's light peaks over the horizon with resurrection light.

**So what do we do with this information?** Here are some simple suggestions. For one, refuse to ignore the reality of just how dark the DARK really is. The darkness through which the women walked on that Easter day is still with us. It did not begin on Good Friday. This darkness is so very dark that human hands pierced the sacred flesh of our Lord with rusty nails. Human pride pushed Jesus out of the city. Human evil pegged Jesus to a cross. And yes, all of us were there that dark day when a darkness so very thick covered the earth with God's sorrow and tears.

One of the most important decisions we can make today is to admit that we are not just good people who get it wrong every once in a while. But rather, we are broken, selfish, and dying people who have no hope unless God breaks into the darkness of our lives with uncommon, life-giving grace. We must throw down every pretension and face the darkness of who we are when left to our darkened selves.

**Remember, too, that darkness is the absence of light**. Scientists tell us the absence of light creates a darkness that cannot get any darker. Think about it. Put yourself in a darkened room and strike one small match. Immediately, that tiny light dispels all the darkness around you. So it is for us who long for the light that is Easter. The darkness through which we walk would be forever dark had God not struck the match that is Christ's risen life. Welcome and embrace our Lord's gift of new life and walk from the darkness toward the light.

And then there is this last Easter gift: Decide today to be a person of Easter light.

Today we bask in the warm glow of the Paschal light. Today, we gladly, joyfully sing our

Alleluia's praise. Today, smiles break on our faces in raucous celebration of our Lord's victory over death. But what of tomorrow?

We will decide today whether or not we will walk into God's good future tomorrow and the following day and every day thereafter as men and women of light. We will decide whether or not we spend our time trudging through the darkness of sin and defeat. Or we will decide to be like Mary Magdalene, moving toward the morning light, becoming a person made new by God's Easter gift.

**So what will it be for us?** We are invited to dare become the persons God in Christ so longs for us to be. We are called to throw off the darkness that would keep us from this dawn's breaking light. Let's say "Yes" to Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Say "Yes" while it is still dark and make our way to Easter's breaking dawn. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**<u>Rising</u>** Jesus entered the deeps of death, a plunge he need not have made, had he not loved us in our sorry state.

**Light and Goodness. Let it be. Heavens and earth, day and night.** Movements of moon and stars that would never have been, had they not been willed into existence. Water, sky, and earth. The great parade of natural kinds, nurtured by earth, fills the horizons. Waters teem and trees flower. Fertility. Multiplicity. Creeping creatures, urgent and easy, wild and gentle, small and great. God is the original environmentalist, the first cause of all our species, the eternal lover of diversity. Good. Yes.

Then the final good gift. "God created them in God's own image; male and female God created them." This final nature, a human one, would be given all else: as gift to nurture, name, and affirm. All is benefaction, and the human, made specially in the likeness of God, is empowered to know existence and pronounce it all good. All is benediction.

At least one might have thought so. But the creature with the power to name, with the freedom of "yes," said "no." It was a rejection of the great order and the great orders. There would be a resounding "no" to the goodness of limits. The tempter was a liar. They already had the tree of life as their shade and comfort. They would not die anyway. They were already like unto God. And yet, resistant to the very condition of their creaturehood they ate of the tree of limits. They wanted more than the power to name all the goods of the earth. They wanted to name evil, to dictate right and wrong. They wanted to control all, even if it meant losing everything they were.

**In exile, there was left to them either despair or faith in a journey back**. But such a journey could be led only by one who knew the way, only by one who could be absolutely trusted, one wholly other than the 'namers' who misnamed it all. Thus Abraham, against all hope, learned to place all hope in the promise that God made, to yield and obey at the core of his very being. Thus he became the ancestor of all faith, even in the face of total loss. The return was rife with peril, traps set by alien powers. Our people were horrified by the odds. The sea of frenzied life seemed impassible. Yet steadfast Moses, armed with nothing more than the "other's" promise, split the very sea in two, offering passage. He became the ancestral leader of all journeys.

**The return had its snares, captivities of every manner**. Our forebears, like us, knew days and years of being lost and abandoned. Moved by our affliction, the one who first pronounced us good consoles us in prophetic voice. "With great tenderness I will take you back ... with enduring love I will pity you." The covenants of Eden, of Noah, Abraham, and Moses will never be forgotten.

**Something new is promised: a water, not of chaos, but of cleansing**; a new food of unremitting nourishment; a mercy confounding, lavish in forgiveness; love beyond the grasp of mere human imagination. "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts." God's very word will come to be the final "yes" of goodness.

**But what of our sin, our resistance, our ritual of death and folly, the compulsive repetition of Eden's inhabitants?** How might the wisdom of God penetrate our thickness? If our hearts would only turn, Baruch chides us, with the humility of the stars. If our minds might only surrender to the will that moves the earth. Yet we cling to other gods, their twisted principles and precepts.

**Ezekiel, who saw our horrors and shame, indicted us but also promised that the covenant holds despite our deed**. Unfaithful, we stay cherished. Besotted, we will be purified. Hard, cold, and lost at sea, we heard Ezekiel's rumor of our ransom. Could we chance a hope for some new spirit, for hearts no longer made of stone, for a homeland?

**Who would have guessed that our home might be a person?** Who would have dreamed that the passage through the sea was just that: going into the water, even under, but with someone who, like a sleek, glorious dolphin of grace, would bear us on his back?

Jesus entered the deeps of death, a plunge he need not have made, had he not loved us in our sorry state. But he went to death with a "yes," with the utter trust of Abraham, the constancy of Moses, the bright reliance of Isaiah. In Easter's vigil, we plunge with him: "Are you not aware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Being like him through likeness to his death, so shall we be through a like resurrection."

**The risen crucified one sounds again God's original "yes" to us now, even in our sin, even in the death which sin brought on us**. Allowing us to be like and in him since he became so fully like unto us, he carries us, as one of his own, to safe land. *If we have died with Christ, we believe that we are also to live with him. His death was death to sin, once for all; his life is life for God. Romans 6:8 – Fr. John Kavanaugh, SJ* 

How do we share this mystery of faith, this Passover from slavery to freedom, from death to life? Fr. Rolheiser has some thoughts for us:

**Finding God in Community** Scripture assures us that we abide in God whenever we stay inside of family and community.

**Some years ago I attended a symposium on religious experience**. A variety of speakers made presentations on how they tried to experience God. One woman, a professor of religious studies, shared how she spent nearly three hours each day meditating, using a strict method for centering prayer. She went on to say that, during those periods of prayer, she sometimes felt God's presence quite intensely.

**During the question period, I asked her this**: "How would you compare the feelings you have when you meditate privately in this way to the feelings you have when you are at the dinner-table with family or friends?" Her response: "There's no comparison, not in terms of religious experience. At table, I sometimes have nice, secular experiences, but in prayer I really meet God!"

I'm both pagan and Christian enough to have reservations about that answer, not because I doubt the power or importance of private prayer, we could all use more of it, but because of what such an answer says about God and our experience of God. What's at issue here?

**Someone, I think it was Buckminster Fuller, once said: "God is a verb not a noun."** At one level that statement is dangerously false. At another, however, it affirms something very important and Christian about our relationship to God, namely, that God is not, first of all, a formula, a dogma, a creedal statement, or a metaphysics that demands our assent. God is a flow of living relationships, a trinity, a family of life that we can enter, taste, breathe within, and let flow through us.

"God is love," Scripture proclaims, "and whoever abides in love abides in God and God abides in him or her." Too often, we miss what that means because we tend to romanticize love. We've all heard this passage read at weddings; appropriate surely, but, within that circumstance, all too-misunderstood for it is pictured as romantic love, as fallingin-love, wonderful and holy though this may be. Thus, at a wedding, we can easily miss the sense of what this text means.

It might best be rendered this way: "God is community, family, parish, friendship, hospitality and whoever abides in these abides in God and God abides in him or her." God is a trinity, a flow of relationships among persons. If this is true, and scripture assures us that it is, then the realities of dealing with each other in community, at the dinner-table, over a bottle of wine or an argument, not to mention the simple giving and receiving of hospitality are not a pure, secular experiences but the stuff of church, the place where the life of God flows through us.

**By definition, God is ineffable, beyond imagination and beyond language, even the best language of theology and Church dogma**. God can never be understood or captured adequately in any formula. But God can be known, experienced, tasted, related to in love and friendship. God is Someone and Something that we live within and which can flow through our veins. To make God real in our lives, therefore, we needn't sneak off,

shamrocks and triangles in hand, to try to somehow picture how three-can-be-one and one-can-be-three.

**Indeed, nor need we read academic books on theology, valuable though these may be.** No. God is a flow of relationships to be experienced in community, family, parish, friendship, and hospitality. When we live inside of these relationships, God lives inside us and we live inside God. Scripture assures us that we abide in God whenever we stay inside of family, community, parish, friendship, hospitality — and, yes, even when we fall in love.

This has huge consequences for how we should understand religious experience: among other things, it means that God is more domestic than monastic (monks will be the first to tell you that). It means too, that in coming to know God, the dinnertable is more important than the theology classroom, the practice of grateful hospitality is more important than the practice of right dogma, and meeting with others to pray as a community can give us something that long hours in private meditation (or, indeed, long years spent absent from Church-life) cannot. Such a concept also blurs all simple distinctions between "religious" and "purely secular" experience. Finally, importantly, it tells us that, since God is inside community, we should be there too, if we wish to go to heaven. Simply put, we can't go to hell, if we stick close to family, community, and parish.

The most pernicious heresies that block us from properly knowing God are not those of formal dogma, but those of a culture of individualism that invite us to believe that we are self-sufficient, that we can have community and family on our own terms, and that we can have God without dealing with each other. But God is community—and only in opening our lives in gracious hospitality will we ever understand that. – Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

It is no wonder that we keep the Paschal Candle, the Easter Candle, in the sanctuary for the entire 50 days of the Easter Season. Fr. Rolheiser has a great reflection on light for us as we celebrate the new life of Easter:

# EASTER LIGHT

**The earth was dark twice. Once at the original creation before God first created light**. But later there was an even deeper darkness, on Good Friday, between the 6th and 9th hour, when we were crucifying God, and as Jesus dying on the cross cried out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me!". Utter darkness. In response to that, God created the most staggering light of all – the resurrection.

**It is interesting to look at how scripture describes the creation of original light**. The Bible opens with these words: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth. Now the earth was a formless void and God breathed over the waters. God said, 'Let there be light' and there was light." A combination of God's breath and God's word produced the first light. The ancients identified God's presence very much with light. For them, God was the antithesis of all darkness and, indeed, the symbol of God's fidelity was the rainbow, namely, refracted light, light broken open to reveal its spectacular inner beauty. **But it got dark a second time!** The Gospels tell us that as Jesus hung on the cross, though it was midday, darkness beset the whole land for three hours. We don't know exactly what occurred here historically. Was the entire earth plunged into darkness? Perhaps. After all, the earth was crucifying God, and God is light! Irrespective of how literally or not we take this, what happened on Good Friday triggered a different kind of darkness, a moral one – the darkness of godlessness, hatred, paranoia, fear, misguided religion, cruelty, idolatry, ideology, and violence. This is the most blinding darkness of all.

**What was God's response?** God's response to the darkness of Good Friday was to say a second time, Let there be light! The resurrection of Jesus is that new light, one which at the end of the day eclipses all other lights.

It is interesting to compare how Scripture describes God creating the new light of the resurrection with how God created the original light at the origins of creation. The Gospel of John has a wonderfully revealing passage that describes Jesus' first appearance to the whole community after his resurrection. It tells us that on the evening of Easter Sunday the disciples (representing here the church) were gathered in a room with the doors locked because of fear. Jesus comes to them, passing right through their locked doors, and stands in the middle of their huddled fearful circle and says to them, "Peace be with you!" And after saying this, he breathes on them and says: "Receive the Holy Spirit."

**Note the parallels to the original creation story**. For the writer of John's Gospel, this huddling in fear behind locked doors is the darkness of Good Friday, a moral "formless void". And Jesus brings light to that darkness in the same way light was brought to the original creation, through God's word and God's breath. Jesus' words, "Peace be with you!" are the resurrected Jesus' way of saying, "Let there be light!" Then, just as at the original creation God's breath begins to order the physical chaos, Jesus' breath, the Holy Spirit, begins to order the moral chaos, continually turning darkness into light – hatred into love, bitterness into graciousness, fear into trust, false religion into true worship, ideology into truth, and vengeance into forgiveness.

The staggering new light that Jesus brings into our world in the resurrection is also one of the things that our Christian creed refers to in its stunning phrase that, in the darkness of Good Friday, Jesus "descended into hell." What's meant by this? Into what hell did he descend? Simply put, the new light of the resurrection (unlike natural light that can be blocked out) can go through every locked door, every blocked entrance, every impenetrable cell, every circle of hatred, every suicidal depression, every paralyzing anger, every kind of darkness of the soul, and even through sin itself, and breathe out peace. This light can penetrate into hell itself.

**Good Friday was bad long before it was good.** We crucified God and plunged the world into darkness at midday. But God created light a second time, a light that cannot be extinguished even if we crucify God – and we have never really stopped doing that! Good Friday still happens every day. But, beyond wishful thinking and natural optimism, we live in

hope because we now know God's response to any moral darkness, God can generate, resurrection, the creation of new light, life beyond death.

**The renowned mystic Julian of Norwich coined the famous phrase: In the end, all will be well, and all will be well, and every manner of being will be well**. To which Oscar Wilde added, And if it isn't well, then it is still not the end. The resurrection of Jesus has brought a new light into the world, one that proclaims against all counter claims that light still triumphs over darkness, love over hatred, order over chaos, and heaven over hell. – Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Some may ask us how we can celebrate Easter in this time of so many struggling against sadness and despair as we see so much challenging faith in this part of the **21**<sup>st</sup> **Century** – the many issues of war and peace, violence and injustice, and the many problems that can rob of us hope. Here are some Easter thoughts as we share the joy of Easter and share in the Easter baskets – a nice sign of hope for families and friends:

# STRUGGLING TO GIVE BIRTH TO HOPE

**After Jesus rose from the dead, his first appearances were to women**. Why? One obvious reason might be that it was women who followed him to his death on Good Friday, while the men largely abandoned him. As well, it was women, not men, who set off for his tomb on Easter morning, hoping to anoint his dead body with spices – so it was women who were in the garden when he first appeared. But there is, I believe, a deeper and more symbolic reason. Women are the midwives. It is generally women who attend to new birth and women who are more paramount in initially nurturing new life in its infancy.

**In any birth a midwife can be helpful**. When a baby is born, normally the head pushes its way through the birth canal first, opening the way for the body to follow. A good midwife can be very helpful at this time, helping to ease that passage through the birth canal, helping ensure that the baby begins to breathe, and helping the mother to immediately begin to nurture that new life. A midwife can sometimes mean the difference between life and death, and she always makes the birth easier and healthier.

Jesus' resurrection birthed new life into our world, and in its infancy that life had to be specially midwifed, both in its emergence and in the initial breaths it took in this world. The resurrection birthed many things, and these had to be midwifed; initially by the women to whom Jesus first appeared, then by the apostles who left us their eyewitness accounts of the risen Jesus, then by the early church, then by its martyrs, then by the lived faith of countless women and men through the centuries, and sometimes too by theologians and spiritual writers. We still need to midwife what was born in the resurrection.

And many things were born in that event – an event as radical as the original creation in what it gave birth to. The resurrection of Jesus was the "first day" a second time, the second time light separated from darkness. Indeed, the world measures time by the resurrection. We are in the year 2024 since it happened. (Christianity was born with that event. New time began then.)

**Prominent within what the resurrection gives birth to and what needs still to be midwifed, is hope**. The resurrection gives birth to hope. The women in the Gospels who first met the resurrected Jesus were the first to be given a true reason for hope and were the first to act as midwifes of that new birth. So too must we. We need to become midwives of hope. But what is hope and how is it given birth in the resurrection?

#### Genuine hope is never to be confused with either wishful thinking or

**temperamental optimism**. Unlike hope, wishful thinking isn't based on anything. It's pure wishing. Optimism, for its part, takes its root either in a natural temperament ("I always see the bright side of things") or on how good or bad the evening news looks on a given day. And we know how that can change from day to day. Hope has a different basis.

Here's an example: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a deeply faith-filled scientist, was once challenged by an agnostic colleague after making a presentation within which he tried to show how the story of salvation history fits perfectly with the insights of science regarding the origins of the universe and the process of evolution. Teilhard went on to suggest, in line with Ephesians 1, 3-10, that the end of the whole evolutionary process will be the union of all things in one great final harmony in Christ. An agnostic colleague challenged him to this effect: That's a wonderfully optimistic little schema you propose. But suppose we blow up the world with an atomic bomb. What happens to your optimist schema then? Teilhard answered in words to this effect: If we blow up the world with an atomic bomb, that will be a set-back, perhaps for millions of years. But what I propose is going to happen, not because I wish it or because I am optimistic that it will happen. It will happen because God promised it – and in the resurrection God showed that God has the power to deliver on that promise.

What the women who first met the risen Jesus experienced was hope, the kind of hope that is based on God's promise to vindicate good over evil and life over death, no matter the circumstance, no matter the obstacle, no matter how awful the news might look on a given day, no matter death itself, and no matter whether we are optimistic or pessimistic. They were the initial midwives helping to give birth to that hope. That task is now ours. – Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

## THE EMPTY TOMB

**Believers and non-believers alike have been arguing about the resurrection since the day Jesus rose**. What really happened? How was he raised from the dead? Did an actual dead body really come back to life and step out of the grave or was the resurrection a monumental life-changing event inside the consciousness of Jesus' followers? Or was the resurrection both, a real physical event and an event inside the consciousness of believers?

**Obviously nobody was there to see what actually happened**. Those who claimed Jesus was alive again didn't see him rise and emerge from the tomb, they met him only after he had already risen and, immediately, believers and sceptics began to divide from

each other, persons who claimed to have touched him and persons who doubted that testimony.

There have been sceptics and believers ever since and no shortage of persons, professional theologians and non-scholarly Christians alike, who believe in the resurrection of Jesus as a faith event but not as a physical event, where an actual body came out of a grave. The faith event is what's important, they claim, and it is incidental whether or not Jesus' actual body came out of the grave.

**Was Jesus' resurrection a faith event or a physical event? It was both**. For Christians it is the most monumental event, faith and otherwise, in history. Two thousand subsequent years cannot be explained, except by the reality of the resurrection. To understand the resurrection of Jesus only as a literal fact, that his body rose from the grave, is to cut the resurrection off from much of its meaning. However, that being admitted, for Christians, the resurrection must also be a radically physical event. Why?

**First, because the Gospels are pretty clear in emphasizing that the tomb was empty and that the resurrected Jesus was more than a spirit or ghost**. We see, for instance, in Luke's Gospel where Jesus invites a doubting Thomas to verify his physicality: "Look at my hands and my feet. It's really me. Touch me. You can see that I have a living body; a ghost does not have a body like this."

As well, and very importantly, to cut the resurrection off from the literal fact that there was real physical transformation of a once dead corpse is to rob it of some of its important meanings and perhaps of the deepest root of its credibility. For the resurrection of Christ to have full meaning it must, among other things, have been a brute physical fact. There needs to be an empty tomb and a dead body returned to life. Why?

**Not as some kind of miracle proof, but because of the incarnation**. To believe in the incarnation and not to believe in the radical physical character of the resurrection is a contradiction. We believe that in the incarnation the Word was made flesh. This takes the mystery of Christ and the reality of the resurrection out of the realm of pure spirit. The incarnation always connotes a reality that's radically physical, tangible, and touchable, like the old dictionary definition of matter as "something extended in space and having weight."

To believe in the incarnation is to believe that God was born into real physical flesh, lived in real physical flesh, died in real physical flesh, and rose in real physical flesh. To believe that the resurrection was only an event in the faith consciousness of the disciples, however real, rich, and radical that might be imagined, is to rob the incarnation of its radical physical character and to fall into the kind of dualism that values spirit and denigrates the physical. Such a dualism devalues the incarnation and this impoverishes the meaning of the resurrection. If the resurrection is only a spiritual event then it is also only an anthropological one and not also a cosmic one. That's a way of saying that it's then an event only about human consciousness and not also about the cosmos.

But Jesus' resurrection isn't just something radically new in terms of human consciousness; it's also something that's radically new in terms of atoms and molecules. The resurrection rearranged hearts and minds, but it also rearranged atoms. Until Jesus' resurrection, dead bodies did not come back to life; they stayed dead, so when his came back to life there was something radically new both at the level of faith and at the level of the atoms and molecules. Precisely because of its brute physicality, Jesus' resurrection offers new hope to atoms as well as to people.

**I believe that Jesus was raised from the dead, literally**. I believe too that this event was, as the rich insights within contemporary theology point out, highly spiritual: an event of faith, of changed consciousness, of new hope empowering a new charity and a new forgiveness. But it was also an event of changed atoms and of a changed dead body. It was radically physical, just as are all events that are part of the incarnation wherein God takes on real flesh. – Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

**So much upon which to reflect during the great season of Easter!** Fifty days – ten more than Lent! So let us have hope and open our hearts to the mystery of faith! I always recommend the great film 'Ben Hur' with Charleton Heston. Even after so many decades, the power of that film for families is a great gift to give at this time of year. What happens in that film in the telling of the story of Jesus is a great conversation starter. Maybe a good investment in family time this year!

**Again, a blessed Easter!** We will be remembering you at all our Easter Masses this year! And God bless all you do to help us be a resurrection community.

# Oremus pro invicem. Soli Deo Gloria.

Fr. Michael J. Lanning