

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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I'M DREAMING OF A WHITE EASTER?

I guess we all remember that old song, "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas." But as I write this article only a week and half before Easter, there is a veritable blizzard going on outside my window. So I thought I would entitle this article, "I'm Dreaming of a White Easter!" Actually though, Easter this year surprisingly falls on April 1st-April Fools Day-so who knows, there could be a surprise and another snowfall- I hope not!

What was really a surprise to the apostles and disciples on that first Easter morning was not the weather, but rather the fact that Jesus actually did rise from the dead. When it came to the Resurrection of Christ, the greatest sceptics and unbelievers were his own followers.

After the tragedy of Good Friday, all of the disciples needed tangible proof that Christ had triumphed over the grave. So he appeared to them and ate with them. To one apostle, "Doubting Thomas"-he actually let him touch his wounds with his finger. So his own friends needed convincing. However, once convinced, the apostles gave their lives for Christ and usually people don't give up their lives for a hoax or a fairy tale!

We have often heard the expression, "Seeing is Believing." We don't have the privilege of seeing Jesus in the flesh the way they did. But that's where faith has to come into play. Jesus told Saint Thomas, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is really the central doctrine of our faith. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, we all might as well go home, put up our feet, turn on the movie channel and have a cup of coffee!

Saint Paul put it this way in the Letter to the Corinthians: "If Christ is not risen from the dead, your faith is worthless and you are still in your sins." We could say that the empty tomb on Easter Sunday morning really is the cornerstone of our Christian religion. Without that cornerstone, the whole thing crumbles.

For the secular world, Easter is all about candy, the Easter bunny and new spring clothes. For the Church, however, and all believers, Easter means so much more. Because Christ is raised from the dead, we know that we will someday rise along with him to a new life and that's exciting; in fact this is the good news of Christianity. Death is not the end and the grave is not our final goal!

All of us should pray for an increase of faith in the resurrection. On the First Easter, the women came to our Lord's tomb and found a huge stone rolled in front of it. "Who will roll away the stone?" they wondered. Maybe some of us have some rather large "stones" of disbelief and doubt in our own lives. Now is the time to ask the Lord to remove those obstacles to faith and come to a deeper appreciation of Christ and his resurrected presence.

I heard a story about a religion teacher who asked her pupils this question in class: "What was the last thing that Jesus said before he died?" One little child raised his hand and answered, "Jesus said, "I'll be back!" Well, today on Easter Sunday we are thankful that he did come back from the dead! Let us, therefore, live as joy-filled Easter Christians so that no matter what the weather is, snow or bright sunshine, we will be at peace in his sight. A very Happy Easter to you and your families!

Sincerely in Christ,
Father Jerome