



## ***THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER***

***“Therefore, my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,  
my body, too, abides in confidence”***

Today is the *Third Sunday of Easter*, and yet the Gospel we just heard proclaimed, calls to mind for us “the first day of the week”: *Easter Sunday*. Those of you there who have been with me here over these past two weeks, can readily recall all that happened on that first day of the week. How “Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed”. And just as “she ran to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them that the stone was rolled away”, so too I must tell you that the stone has been rolled away; and not just that stone which Mary of Magdala reported, but so too the stone that prevented “Masses with a Congregation” from taking place. Yes, I am happy to tell you that there are now four dioceses in the United States where public Mass is being offered”. (And on the local front, the stone has been rolled away from the entrance to *Duryea’s Flower Shop in the Village of Freeport*. Why not give them a call and they will deliver some good news to people who may be weeping, afraid, doubting, and downcast.)

Yes, those of you there who have been with me here over these past two weeks, can readily recall all that has happened on that first day of the week. How “on the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” And just as “the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord”, so too are Christians rejoicing throughout the world where, even though the doors of their churches may be locked, (with help from science, technology, the internet) Christ is standing in their midst this very day saying: “Peace be with you.”

As much as I am glad and rejoicing that people are connecting with Our Holy Redeemer Parish live streamed and online, what’s most important is that we connect to Our Holy Redeemer in Person; and that can be done without a computer, without a smart phone, without an android, without an iPad, without a radio, without a television, ... without anything. All we need to do, to make that connection, is (as the Lord Jesus told us Himself on Ash Wednesday): to go into our *inner room and close the door!*

At this very moment in the history of the world, we have an unprecedented opportunity to make that connection, to go into our inner rooms – without a computer, a smart phone, an android, anything – and within that inner room, find God Who is calling us there with the words: “Come to Me all you who labour and find life burdensome”. God Who is waiting there - not just to listen to us but to talk to us, and to assure us that He is with us always!

This opportunity is in many ways, similar to the 40 day/40 night experience of Jesus in the desert. Like Jesus Who was thrust into the desert, we have been thrust into quarantine. Like Jesus Who was tempted by the devil, we are being tempted by the devil. Like Jesus, we are tempted to doubt. Like Jesus, we are tempted to hunger and thirst for earthly foods rather than for every Word that comes forth from the mouth of God. Like Jesus, we are tempted to put God to the test. And like Jesus, we are tempted to bow down and worship and serve false gods; perhaps that computer, perhaps that smart phone, perhaps that android, perhaps Science and technology, ... the internet.

Like Jesus, we find ourselves amongst wild beasts (and children I’m not just talking about your parents, and parents I’m not just talking about your children, and girls I’m not talking about your little brothers, but rather I am talking about the wild beasts that are prowling about within our hearts and minds, looking to devour the hope that tells us we will come out of this quarantine, the faith that tells us that we do not walk

alone, and the trust we have in God Who brought us through 11 September 2001; 22 January 1973; 07 December 1941; the Great Depression; the Spanish Flu; the Potato Famine, and so much more.

Like Jesus, we too are being ministered to by Angels, and if that latter connection is somehow absent from our experience, then perhaps we have yet to accept this unprecedented opportunity to go into our inner rooms/our quarantine/our desert. Perhaps we are still fighting it, and longing for the executive order to be issued at a daily coronavirus-briefing that we think will liberate us! If that is what we are waiting for; if that is what you, your spouses, your children, your neighbours, your friends think is going to “set you free” to live again, if that is what I and my brother Pastors, Priests, and members of other Religious communities think is going to “set us free” to live again, then like the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus who “were hoping that Jesus would be the One to redeem Israel” in a temporal way, we are going to be terribly disappointed because when that “executive order does come” and we are “liberated”, we will still have to suffer through various trials; just like Jesus Who after emerging from His quarantine, had to suffer through various trials; trials right up until the point of death; death on a cross.

Yes, those of you there, who have been with me here over these past two weeks, can readily recall all that has happened on that first day of the week, but brothers and sisters, what got people through their weeping, their fears, and their doubting ... their trials *after the Resurrection* was not all that happened on that first day of the week, but rather it was all “the things that took place in Jerusalem in these days *before* that first day of the week” that got them through those trials. “What sort of things?” you might ask. The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, Who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed Him over to a sentence of death and crucified Him.” Just as it was my brothers and sisters, the remembrance of those things (or rather of the One Who suffered those things; the One Who Himself wept, suffered, and died for you there and me here) that got people through their trials on that first day of the week and everyday thereafter, so too will our remembrance of Him draw Him near to us, and get us through our trials: you there, me here and yes: God with us! (Go in peace.)



Please, while you may not be able to physically *come home* for Holy Mass to manifest your belief in Him, you may express that belief by taking the time to participate in Mass with assistance from your television or computer. If you have access to a computer and the internet, please visit our Parish Website at [www.ohreport.org](http://www.ohreport.org). If you do not have access to a computer and the internet, but can access a television, please tune into *Catholic Faith Network*: Optimum Channel 29/137; Verizon FiOS TV Channel 296; Spectrum Channel 162/471

## “BE *STILL*, AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD”



### OUR HOLY REDEEMER IS “LIVESTREAMING” SUNDAY MASS

11:30 A.M. English

1:00 P.M. Spanish

Please visit [www.ohreport.org](http://www.ohreport.org) for more details