

Here we find ourselves in the Easter Octave ... these eight-days are meant to amplify that one special day - the day Our Lord Jesus Christ rose triumphant from death. There only remain two octaves in the Church calendar - two eight day periods of celebration: Easter, and Christmas. Perhaps we miss this liturgical phenomenon because all too often, our priests and pastors are exhausted after preparations for both Easter and Christmas ... and in that vein, I ask your prayers for my brother priests and myself as well. That we might have the zeal of the Apostles and be set on fire with the boldness of the Holy Spirit ... so that we, in union with our bishop, may evangelize a highly secularized world. It is your prayers that hold us up and support us. One Hail Mary is better than all the talking or complaining about this or that in regards to ecclesiastical things.

Keeping with the theme of the past couple of months, and since we find ourselves today in the Octave of Easter, I would like to continue to expound on the Mysteries of the Rosary and their associated Virtues ... focusing at this time on the Glorious Mysteries ...

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| The Resurrection: | Faith |
| The Ascension: | Hope, Desire for Heaven |
| The Descent of the Holy Spirit: | Love of God, Wisdom, Knowing and sharing the truth |
| The Assumption of Mary: | Devotion to Mary, Grace of a happy death |
| The Coronation of the BVM: | Eternal Happiness |

For myself, the first three Mysteries - which could be summarized as Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost - I have always remembered as being tied to "Faith, Hope, and Love." And as these three Virtues are also known as the Supernatural or Theological Virtues - with which we are all infused at our own Holy Baptism - it is fitting that they be associated with the events surrounding Easter - which are the two great Feasts which enclose the forty days of the Easter Season - namely Easter (the Resurrection) and Our Lord's Ascension. Pentecost comes - traditionally 9 days after the Ascension. But when Ascension is moved from Thursday to Sunday, we lose a couple of days of that Novena to the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, Pentecost follows a full fifty days after the Easter Vigil - hence the prefix "Pent" which is Greek for 5 or 50.

Our Lady's Assumption - which is the patronal feast of our own Diocese of Saginaw - carries with it the desire for Devotion to Mary. One of the pillars of

our Apostolate is of course making Our Lady and her messages known. As well as praying the Rosary and encouraging others to make the Five First Saturdays.

And the last Glorious Mystery - the Coronation of Our Lady - has as its virtue or desire - Eternal happiness. This last thought, can be seen as tying in with both the Ascension of Our Lord, and the Assumption of Our Lady - which can also be associated with Desire for Heaven and the Grace of a Happy Death. Eternal Happiness - some would say - is the “product” which we Christians peddle. Although I’m not sure that we are selling it all that well. Desire for Heaven is not a morbid fixation on death, but rather a desire for the things of Heaven - especially the desire to spend eternity with Our Lord and Our Lady ... forever. We can prepare ourselves for that eternity by praying the Rosary - in a sense spending time with Our Lady while meditating on the life of Our Lord ... as well as in Eucharistic Adoration. I know that often times our parish buildings are locked. But, I am reminded of the scene in the movie the Passion of the Christ - where Our Lord is confined to a cell below the pavement - and Our Lady bends down to touch the pavement, knowing that He is on the other side. We all have a general idea that the Blessed Sacrament is in every church that has a tabernacle. A visit to the church parking lot for a few moments of prayer - even if the Church is locked - puts us in proximity of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. But even to revive the practice of bowing one’s head when passing a church, or making the Sign of the Cross when driving by - gives glory to God in this immense miracle, and reminds us that He has not left us as orphans. And finally, the graces of a happy death are something promised by Our Lady - and surely if we have spent time in life with Our Lord and Our Lady in prayer - most assuredly they will be present to assist us in the hour of our death.

In reflecting on the readings for this day - from the Acts of the Apostles, where Peter and John are imprisoned and even beaten for preaching the Gospel. Yet these punishments do not discourage them. And they boldly proclaim: “It is impossible for us not to speak about what we have seen and heard.” This should give us pause to consider - how is it possible for us NOT to speak about the miracles and graces we know about?

And in the Gospel, we hear of poor Mary Magdalene - who when she related her own Joy of seeing Our Lord risen and alive, we are told “they did not believe.” And when the disciples from Emmaus returned to proclaim the resurrection to them, again we hear “they did not believe them either.” And

Our Lord rebukes the Apostles “for their unbelief and hardness of heart because they had not believed”.

My friends, it is easier for us to live among those who do not believe by acting as if we too are unbelievers, but that is not what Christ has called us to do. Rather, we too are called by Jesus Himself to “Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.”

It has been on my heart that our own Apostolate should be engaged more in proclaiming the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ by spreading Our Lady’s message at Fatima - which confirms and emphasizes the Gospel for our contemporary world. I know that there are CD’s and books; and websites and leaflets about Our Lady and about Fatima. So, as a start, I’ve made available at the entrance three different flyers: two on the Rosary and one on Our Lady. They aren’t folded - but that is so that you can take it home and make your own copies to distribute. And there’s a website on the flyers - where you can find a whole lot of tracts on Our Catholic Faith written by esteemed theologians and saints. Even if you just take one, and pass it on to someone. This is a start. And this really is just the beginning. I will leave it to your conscience and the Holy Spirit’s inspiration as to what more we may be able to do in the coming months and years. But my friends, do not quench the Spirit.

And so, as we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ - let us pray for an increase in the Baptismal Graces for ourselves and for all Christians. May we increase in Faith, Hope, and Love - in such abundance that we are transformed into modern-day Apostles of the Faith - boldly sharing what we have heard - regardless of the obstacles.

May Our Lady of Apostles intercede for us, and pray for us.