



## Easter Sunday 2017

I want to begin by wishing you all a happy Easter! And thank you very much for coming out for this beautiful celebration of Christ's resurrection.

For the past 40 days we walked through Lent. The church asked us during that time to spend time in prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Not that we don't do these things, but during Lent we make a special effort to just do a little bit more.

In the Churches wisdom she is preparing us to go into battle and to be prepared we must be able to do our spiritual exercises as an athlete prepares his body for sport.

As Catholics we celebrate the Paschal Mystery. It is one of the central concepts of our Catholic faith relating to the history of salvation. It centers around the Passion, the Death and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ – the work God the Father sent his son to accomplish on earth.

When I read the story of the Passion of Jesus in the Gospels... I am moved. When I watched Mel Gibson's portrayal of the Passion of Jesus in his movie "The Passion of the Christ", those images are locked into my mind forever. So, when I pray the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary my mind becomes very active as Jesus is condemned to death, beaten, crowned with thorns, walks the way to Calvary and is crucified. Very vivid, very alive, way back then... what about now?

How do I experience the Paschal mystery? How does it affect me on a day today basis? How do I become aware of his presence in my life - in a real way and not just something I know about (History)?

The Paschal mystery is basically the process of dying and rising, death and new life. We see this all around us and in our own lives. We live the Paschal mystery today now!

For example, how about the person that is angry. Not just getting upset that somebody cut you off on the road, but a person who has a deep anger and they wrestle with this anger and they just don't seem to be able to let go of it and to move on. This is the passion!

What about the person who's very confused is really what I would call a searcher they are bundled up in themselves looking for direction whether it's for a job, love, and many other personal issues such as divorce who's whole life is in a state of confusion?

This is the passion!

Or how about the person who is lonely? Loneliness can strike us no matter what our **age**. We can be high school, college, young adults, middle-aged and old age we can all be suffering from loneliness. Loneliness can move us to what I would call depression. This is the passion!

Depression! And by depression I do not mean having a blue day. We all have them. We all have a tough day a tough week a tough month but I'm talking about something much deeper and more serious. People that get in accidents and their whole life changes in an instant. They will never be the same in one sense of the word, or the death of a loved one. This is the passion!

In Jesus' Passion where he was stripped, beaten and crucified ultimately left to die. It was on the cross that he cried out "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." and then "Into your hands Father I commend my spirit." And he died!

In our own life's journey, in our passions we come to a point where we have to do what Jesus did - he surrendered - he gave it up- he turned it over to God.

We learn from Jesus that new life can come from death, that we can find meaning in tough times, that there really is light in the darkness. We learned that all life has this rhythm of dying and rising and that God is with us in the good times and in the bad. Our Catholic faith teaches us that death no longer has the last word. And isn't it great to know that when we go through our passions and we all go through them we have the realization, that Jesus "been there, done that" he is with us, he understands us and new life will come from death.

This is what we celebrate today new life!

This is what we celebrate today hope!

This is what we celebrate today Resurrection.

Happy Easter!