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SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2017

SOLEMNITY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD (EASTER SUNDAY) Your Easter best is good enough

It used to be that on Easter everyone would put on their best clothes, new ones if they could afford them. It was a sign of new beginnings and a fresh start. No matter what had happened in people's lives, Easter remained a sign of hope. And so it remains, regardless of what you wear. Today we are an Easter people. Jesus has conquered sin and death. The rules are rewritten. What will you put on to be a new and better person?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8; Victimae Paschali Laudes; John 20:1-9 or Matthew 28:1-10 (42, 41) or, at an afternoon or evening Mass, Luke 24:13-35 (46). "He saw and believed."*

MONDAY, APRIL 17 MONDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER All depends on how you look at it

If you grew up with siblings, chances are you've had the experience of your side of the story being far different from the one your brother or sister told. That's because our perceptions are based on self-interest. The soldiers in Matthew's Resurrection story witnessed the same thing the women did, yet their account was a lot different because the empty tomb meant trouble for them. For the women, on the other hand, the empty tomb awakened hope, and the message of the angel filled them with joy. They had a whole different story to tell, one that we hear being told to this day.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 2:14, 22-33; Victimae Paschali Laudes (42); Matthew 28:8-15 (261). "Suddenly, Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!'"*

TUESDAY, APRIL 18 TUESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER Look and you will see

When Mary Magdalene meets Jesus near the tomb, he asks her an important question: "Whom are you looking for?" Not Jesus himself, obviously, because she stood not long ago at the cross where he died. She imagines the man to whom she is speaking is the gardener—who else would be in a cemetery at dawn? Only those who are actually looking for Jesus will be sure to recognize him when they see him, whether in the face of a stranger or a friend. Jesus isn't hiding. He wants to be revealed!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 2:36-41; Victimae Paschali Laudes (42); John 20:11-18 (262). "Jesus said to her; 'Woman, why are you weeping?'"*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19 WEDNESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER All fired up

What makes your heart come alive with the true fire of passion? Is it when you hear a story about a noble and courageous act? Or read an article about injustice that makes you burn with indignation? Does the sight of human suffering on a street corner arouse your compassion to the brim? Does the innocence in a child's face melt your heart with love? Our hearts were made for the richness of such passion, and our lives are given to us to experience life to the fullest. Avoid activities that deaden and suppress your passion. Follow the fire!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 3:1-10; Victimae Paschali Laudes (42); Luke 24:13-35 (263). "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking?"*

THURSDAY, APRIL 20 THURSDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER Keep it real

"Flesh and blood" we say, referring to the people we love to whom we're related. "Body and soul" we say to describe the depth of our love, our commitment, our joy. This is the way God reaches out to us, as beloved children: flesh and blood, body and soul—healing a lame man who dances with delight, sending a risen Christ we can see and touch. The love God gives us—and asks in return—isn't the ethereal love of "dreams," wrote Dorothy Day, cofounder of the Catholic Worker movement, but a hands-on and sometimes "dreadful love" that clothes the naked and feeds the starving. The works of mercy show that real love is real concrete. Let's be real.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 3:11-26; Victimae Paschali Laudes (42); Luke 24:35-48 (264). "A ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."*

FRIDAY, APRIL 21 FRIDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER Get over it

Despite knowing that he had hurt Jesus deeply and forsaken him in his hour of need, Peter does not cower in Jesus' presence. In fact, he is thrilled to hear that the risen Jesus has come to break bread with the disciples. Peter's joy at the coming of the Lord is a signature Christian trait. Peter truly believes he is forgiven and that nothing can keep him from the love of God, so he is not afraid. Yet many of us have not reached that level of faith. We are ashamed of our failings and try to run from God's gaze. It's time to acknowledge your sins and move on. Don't keep Jesus waiting.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 4:1-12; Victimae Paschali Laudes (42); John 21:1-14 (265). "Jesus said to them, 'Come, have breakfast.'"*

SATURDAY, APRIL 22 SATURDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER See the light

The expression "seeing is believing" may come from the most famous doubter of all, the Apostle Thomas, who insisted on touching the wounds of the risen Jesus before he would accept the fact of Christ's Resurrection. Thomas, though, wasn't alone. Others among the first disciples wouldn't at first give credence to the incredible news. Throughout his earthly ministry Christ's main request was to believe in him and his message, and after he was raised that did not—and has not—changed. With an eye toward generations of Christians to come, Jesus told Thomas, "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 4:13-21; Victimae Paschali Laudes (42); Mark 16:9-15 (266). "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."*



Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

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