

Easter Day 2021
Sermon - Saint Joseph Parish
Father Craig Looney
1 COR. 5. 7 ST. JOHN 20.1-9

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It is customary to greet another person on Easter morning with these words...

...*"Alleluia! Christ is risen!"*

And the person we greet with these words responds...

...*"He is risen indeed! Alleluia!"*

The bodily Resurrection of Jesus is at the core of our Christian faith. It is unprecedented in the history of mankind. It is perplexing because it goes against the known laws of nature.

We believe Jesus really rose from the dead in a changed human body...not as a disembodied spirit. We believe this because our faith compels us to believe what seems impossible.

We believe Jesus' Resurrection is true because of the eyewitness testimonies of those who saw him and walked and talked with him over the forty days between his Resurrection and the Ascension. They ate lunch with Jesus after the Resurrection...in fact he cooked the meal. Disembodied spirits don't eat.

Jesus' Resurrection makes possible our own resurrections to newness of life...in changed and perfected bodies.

Saint Paul writes to the Church in Corinth in the words we memorialize in the Easter Canticle...

...*"Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."*

Jesus is the "first-fruits" of those who have died and been raised from death to life everlasting. "First-fruits" means there are "more fruits" to follow. We are the "more fruits" to follow. We will be raised again in perfected bodies...not as ethereal spirits lacking substance. We will somehow recognize each other. We can only imagine what a perfected body will be like.

In the Gospel, Mary Magdalene is the first to discover Jesus' empty grave. She runs to find Peter and John to tell them what she has discovered. They too went to the grave and saw it empty, just as Mary said.

Mary and the disciples were astonished by what they saw. They went back to their own homes, not yet understanding the truth about the Resurrection. Jesus would make himself known to them...in his resurrected body...and they would believe...and spread the Good News...and we must do the same.

So let me say to all of you again...

...*"Alleluia! Christ is risen!"*

...*"He is risen indeed! Alleluia!"*

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