

# Fr. Simon Sez



Happy Easter! The Lord has risen as He said! People had much suffering this past Lent, an opportunity to have a closer union with Christ on the Cross. St. Paul says, “If we have died with Christ, we shall also rise with Him! If we accept our suffering and offer it up to God, it will bear fruit. We could possibly have our best Easter season ever, if we had our worse suffering this past Lent and offered it up! We may not want to suffer, but it is necessary for us to suffer so that we may share in the Resurrection.

**Fr. Simon on Vacation:** I will be gone on vacation this Easter Sunday afternoon through Thursday night. In case of funerals or other serious concerns, contact the secretaries of our parishes who can contact me.



**Divine Mercy Sunday Promise:** Divine Mercy Sunday is next Sunday, the Second Sunday of Easter, every year. Be sure to take advantage of this only day of the year when you can receive the same effects as “a second baptism” by going to confession and receiving Holy Communion on the weekend. That means, Jesus, the Divine Mercy promised that

faithful people that go to confession and receive Holy Communion on Divine Mercy Sunday will have all of their sins wiped away and all punishment due to sin (no punishment in purgatory will be required for all past sins forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance, a.k.a. confession). If you are not able to go to confession before Mass and receive communion, you can request to do this immediately following the Divine Mercy Holy Hours scheduled for next Sunday afternoon at SHC in Gettysburg 3:00 p.m. and SPX Church in Onida at 5:30 p.m. I am providing two single-sheet pages of bulletin inserts explaining this devotion in more detail.

I will have extra copies of the Divine Mercy bulletin inserts available in our church gathering spaces. If you have any extra Divine Mercy materials, you can leave them in our church entries to share as long as they have been formally approved by a bishop in union with the Pope or myself. The Chaplet of Divine Mercy has many promises attached to it as well.

**Beginning & Present Altar Servers:** I trained present and new Altar servers multiple times. Since there are significant differences in the previous ways, all Altar servers are required to have training. If any existing Altar servers still need training, please let the parish secretaries know. Our parish secretaries can start scheduling all Altar servers who have been trained and not the Altar servers who have not been trained.

## Seeing and Believing: Scott Hahn Reflects on Easter Sunday



Acts 10:34, 37–43  
Psalm 118:1–2, 16–17, 22–23  
Colossians 3:1–4  
John 20:1–9

Jesus is nowhere visible. Yet today’s Gospel tells us that Peter and John “saw and believed.”

What did they see? Burial shrouds lying on the floor of an empty tomb. Maybe that convinced them that He hadn’t been carted off by grave robbers, who usually stole the expensive burial linens and left the corpses behind.

But notice the repetition of the word “tomb”—seven times in nine verses. They saw the empty tomb and they believed what He had promised: that God would raise Him on the third day.

Chosen to be His “witnesses,” today’s First Reading tells us, the Apostles were “commissioned . . . to preach . . . and testify” to all that they had seen—from His anointing with the Holy Spirit at the Jordan to the empty tomb. More than their own experience, they were instructed in the mysteries of the divine economy, God’s saving plan—to know how “all the prophets bear witness” to Him (see Luke 24:27, 44).

Now they could “understand the Scripture,” could teach us what He had told them—that He was “the Stone which the builders rejected,” that today’s Psalm prophesies His Resurrection and exaltation (see Luke 20:17; Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11).

We are the children of the apostolic witnesses. That is why we still gather early in the morning on the first day of every week to celebrate this feast of the empty tomb, give thanks for “Christ our life,” as today’s Epistle calls Him.

Baptized into His death and Resurrection, we live the heavenly life of the risen Christ, our lives “hidden with Christ in God.” We are now His witnesses, too. But we testify to things we cannot see but only believe; we seek in earthly things what is above.

We live in memory of the Apostles’ witness, like them eating and drinking with the risen Lord at the altar. And we wait in hope for what the Apostles told us would come—the day when we too “will appear with Him in glory.”