

Dear Parishioners,

Writing this Holy Saturday afternoon, I can't help but think of aspects of the liturgy we'll be missing tonight as we watch the taped liturgy. There are flowers and white cloths in the sanctuary and at the shrines, but the power of the night will have to come alive in our memories. Our community is together, not physically, but through the bonds of care and concern, even with those whom we don't know by name, but we miss when they're not at Mass. Many of us have watched children grow from kindergarten into the work world, witnessed the aging process slow the movement of our friends, and cried at funerals of some of our most involved parishioners.

The lighting of the Easter fire and entrance into the darkened church with the Paschal Candle from which we light our own smaller ones, reminds us of our call to be light to the world and to our own worlds. This candle - present at baptisms, weddings and funerals - represents Christ who is ALWAYS the light in whatever darkness we may be going through, including this world-wide one. I think of our five catechumens and candidates, eager to be initiated into the Church through baptism, confirmation and Eucharist after eight months of weekly sessions, reflection, prayer and spiritual growth. We renew our own baptismal promises, made by our parents when we were infants or by those of us who have come into the Body of Christ through RCIA in years past.

In the gospel for tonight, Matthew 28:1-10, Mary Magdalene and another Mary go to the tomb of Jesus to weep. An angel appears and tells them, "Do not be afraid...He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said." As they run to tell this amazing news to the disciples, Jesus meets them on the way and says again, "Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers [and sisters] to go to Galilee, and there they will see me." In the midst of their sorrow, Jesus is present to them and consoles them. Surely, in this time of great fear and concern especially for those on the front lines and disproportionately affected, Jesus will also be present to us. As he sends the women to tell his disciples of his risen presence, may he also send us to be a compassionate presence to those in need.

A blessed Easter to all of you!
Sheral