



---

31 March 2024 + Easter Sunday

*Alleluia! He is risen! Happy Easter everyone. It was wonderful to see so many of you attend the commemoration of the Sacred Triduum during Holy Week. A special thank you to all of our ministers, musicians, and decorators who served during this time, and all of you who offered memorial donations for the Easter flowers. Hopefully they will stick around through the Easter season. I also wanted to thank those of you who gave both Deacon Willkom and I Easter cards and greetings.*

*I hope that our Easter parish retreat was meaningful for those of you who attended the Sacred Triduum. Easter is a reminder, once again, that Jesus did not suffer and die as a mere victim of this world. The radical nature of Christianity, when it is truly believed and lived with courage and faith, transforms the world. When the apostles and disciples of Jesus finally embraced their Christian vocations to go out into the world and to bring the Gospel, the world itself was changed. It is important to remember just how few disciples Jesus started with, and how their courage brought Christian faith and life to the whole world. We cannot allow ourselves to fall into the "victimization" mentality. Or can we indeed find life and hope again if we but use the gifts of courage and fortitude given to us by the Holy Spirit.*

*As I said in my Easter message, Jesus went into the fire of the spiritual battle against Satan and all other powers of evil. Just when most thought that he lost the battle, he emerged victorious. Not only did Jesus save us, but showed us how even when we face the final battle in death, we can emerge victorious if we but face death with courage and faith. On Good Friday, I used the image of organizations who paid off the mortgages for those families of first responders and military personnel who offered their lives on the line for us, and how Jesus paid the mortgage on our life when he offered himself on the Cross so that we could live in his Father's house. I love that image! It calls forth in us a deep gratitude.*

*As we continue to celebrate Easter, and are reminded of those who once thought all was lost on Good Friday, but saw and touched Jesus after his resurrection; may we be filled with their same hope and joy. To say that Jesus "is" risen, means that he is as much present with us now as he was 2000 years ago, but in the sacramental way, he gives himself to us, especially in the gift of himself in the Holy Eucharist. I hope you have a wonderful celebration with your family. Remind them of the Good News of Easter. Encourage young people not to be victims of this world, but victors in Jesus Christ.*

*Blessings and best wishes,*