

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF APRIL 3-4, 2021**

Easter Vigil/Easter Sunday

**Gospel (Holy Saturday At the Easter Vigil, Lectionary 41)**Mark 16:1-7  
  
When the sabbath was over,  
Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome  
brought spices so that they might go and anoint him.  
Very early when the sun had risen,  
on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb.  
They were saying to one another,  
“Who will roll back the stone for us  
from the entrance to the tomb?”  
When they looked up,   
they saw that the stone had been rolled back;  
it was very large.  
On entering the tomb they saw a young man  
sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe,  
and they were utterly amazed.  
He said to them, “Do not be amazed!  
You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified.  
He has been raised; he is not here.  
Behold the place where they laid him.  
But go and tell his disciples and Peter.  
‘He is going before you to Galilee;  
there you will see him, as he told you.’”

**Gospel (The Mass of Easter Sunday, Lectionary 42)**

Jn 20:1-9

On the first day of the week,  
Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning,  
while it was still dark,  
and saw the stone removed from the tomb.  
So she ran and went to Simon Peter  
and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them,  
“They have taken the Lord from the tomb,  
and we don’t know where they put him.”  
So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb.  
They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter  
and arrived at the tomb first;  
he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in.  
When Simon Peter arrived after him,  
he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there,  
and the cloth that had covered his head,  
not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place.  
Then the other disciple also went in,  
the one who had arrived at the tomb first,  
and he saw and believed.  
For they did not yet understand the Scripture  
that he had to rise from the dead.

**Homily helper / connection to stewardship / giving / charity / almsgiving**

* God leads us to Himself by our desires
  + What reason did Mary (and the other women) have to be at the tomb that morning? Jesus was dead. The tomb was sealed.
  + And yet, it was a desire to be with Jesus, a desire stronger even than death!, that brought Mary (and the other women) to the tomb and the Good News of the Resurrection
    - Tidbit: Mary Magdalene is known as the Apostle to the Apostles, because she was the one who first saw the empty tomb and proclaimed this to the Apostles
* What are our desires?
  + Not superficial ones
  + But what do we truly long for? Love. Justice. Peace. Goodness.
  + Not temporary or in half measures. But complete and forever.
* Our desires are fulfilled in Jesus
  + If we follow our deepest desires, if we allow ourselves to remain with them and not be distracted or deterred, just as Mary Magdalene wasn’t by the death of Christ or the boulder in front of the tomb, they will lead us to the Risen Jesus, the only one who has overcome death and is the fulfilment of all our desires
  + We are made for God! And Jesus is God come down to meet us. He is who we desire.
* God is drawing us to Him through our daily desires; be faithful to them, even when they seem daunting.
  + Desire to strengthen parish through Annual Diocesan Appeal might be one example

**Intercession**

For the Annual Diocesan Appeal, that inspired by our God-given desire to strengthen our parish, we might make a generous contribution this Easter season.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

What would have happened if Mary Magdalene (and, depending on which Gospel account you read, the other women) hadn’t come to the tomb on that first Easter Sunday morning? It’s crazy to think, but it seems likely that humanity might’ve missed out on the Good News of Christ’s resurrection and His victory over death. After all, the apostles, those closest to Jesus, those who’d heard him repeatedly speak of His death and resurrection during his ministry, were in hiding—either because they didn’t believe in Jesus’s promise, or because their fear of punishment by the authorities deterred them from following up on it.

Instead, God drew Mary Magdalene to the tomb through her desire to be with Christ—even in His death. This underscores an important point: God draws us to Himself through our desires! Our hearts are made for God, and prayerfully reflecting upon where our deepest desires point is one of the best ways of discerning God’s will for us.

Our parish has discerned a desire to strengthen our community through the Annual Diocesan Appeal. As we enter into the Easter season, confident that God draws us to Himself through our daily desires, let’s discern how we can each generously support this important cause.

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

Happy Easter! During this season, and especially today, we’re reminded to be a people of hope who are confident that God wants to answer our deepest desires. One of our desires as a parish community is to strengthen our parish through the Annual Diocesan Appeal. Please consider making a donation during this Easter season.

**Social media post/content**

Photo: Empty tomb, stone rolled away. “Christ is Risen”

Copy: He is Risen! Let us trust that God will fulfill our deepest desires.