

Statement for Website  
From Fr. Michael Basque

08 April 2020

First, a few things you should know.

- I forgot to mention earlier that Bishop Bergie is the featured presenter on this year's National Catholic Mission which is being broadcast on Salt and Light Television this week. I do not have the dates and times of the broadcast but I am certain this information is available on the Diocesan website.
- Thank-you to all those who have been dropping off non-perishable food and toiletries at the Parish Office for the St. Vincent DePaul Society. The organization is still able to provide help for the needy in our community. Please continue supporting our St. Vincent DePaul Society.

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When I was younger, I used to look forward to Easter. One of the things I enjoyed most about it was all the preparations we made before the big day arrived. There were decorations to put up, special foods to buy and prepare and putting all the candies in the Easter Basket. It goes without saying, this Easter will be different. I am certain the same will be true for our Jewish friends celebrating Passover. There are likely going to be fewer decorations, more modest meals and less candy in most homes. Besides, there seems little enthusiasm to celebrate in the middle of a pandemic which is causing so much suffering and death.

In today's Gospel, Christ tells his disciples to make the necessary preparations for their Passover celebration. As Jews, they would have looked forward to observing this important feast in Jerusalem. After all, Passover recalled the event which sparked liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, a good news story for people whose land was occupied by the Romans. There was food and wine to consume as well as the company of family and friends to share. This year their celebration was taking place in the Jewish capital, where the Temple was located which was the center of their religious life. Yet, they could not have imagined what would happen over the next few days. Jesus would transform the Passover meal into the Last Supper and the institution of the Eucharist. He would be betrayed by one of them, denied by another, arrested, condemned by Jewish and Roman officials on false charges, beaten, nailed to a cross, ridiculed while he was suffering and died as a common criminal. Then three days later, he would rise from the dead and appear to many of his followers. These events reveal the essential truths of our Christian tradition and are the most important ones in the history of humanity.

During this Covid 19 pandemic, our "bare bones" Easter celebrations might be a blessing in disguise. This year we might be less distracted by all the "extras" associated with the Feast; which although nice are not necessary. This year might provide us with the opportunity to reflect upon the gift of the Eucharist (Christ's body and blood) which we were able to receive daily before the pandemic struck, and one day will be able to do so again. We have the chance to consider that Jesus suffered and died on the cross not because we were holy but sinners. We have the chance to contemplate the time Jesus spent in the tomb patiently waiting for what would happen next. Finally, we can meditate on his rising from the dead to prove the eternal life he promised was not wishful thinking but real. He then shared that good news with his followers.

Catholics and other people of faith understand how the busyness of life can distract them from seeing what is really important. Our focus should be on what God has done for us and how

we can share with others the good news of the hope and joy which comes from our salvation. The ability to separate the essential from the trivial (in a world which often cannot do so) enables us to cope with the struggles we will face in the coming weeks and months and provide support for those who find it hard to continue.

Next year, our Easter celebrations will likely feature nicer decorations, better meals and more candy. But, if we use this year's Easter wisely, will that celebration really be that much better?