



APRIL
2020

Stella Maris

SUPPORTING SEAFARERS AND FISHERS AROUND THE WORLD

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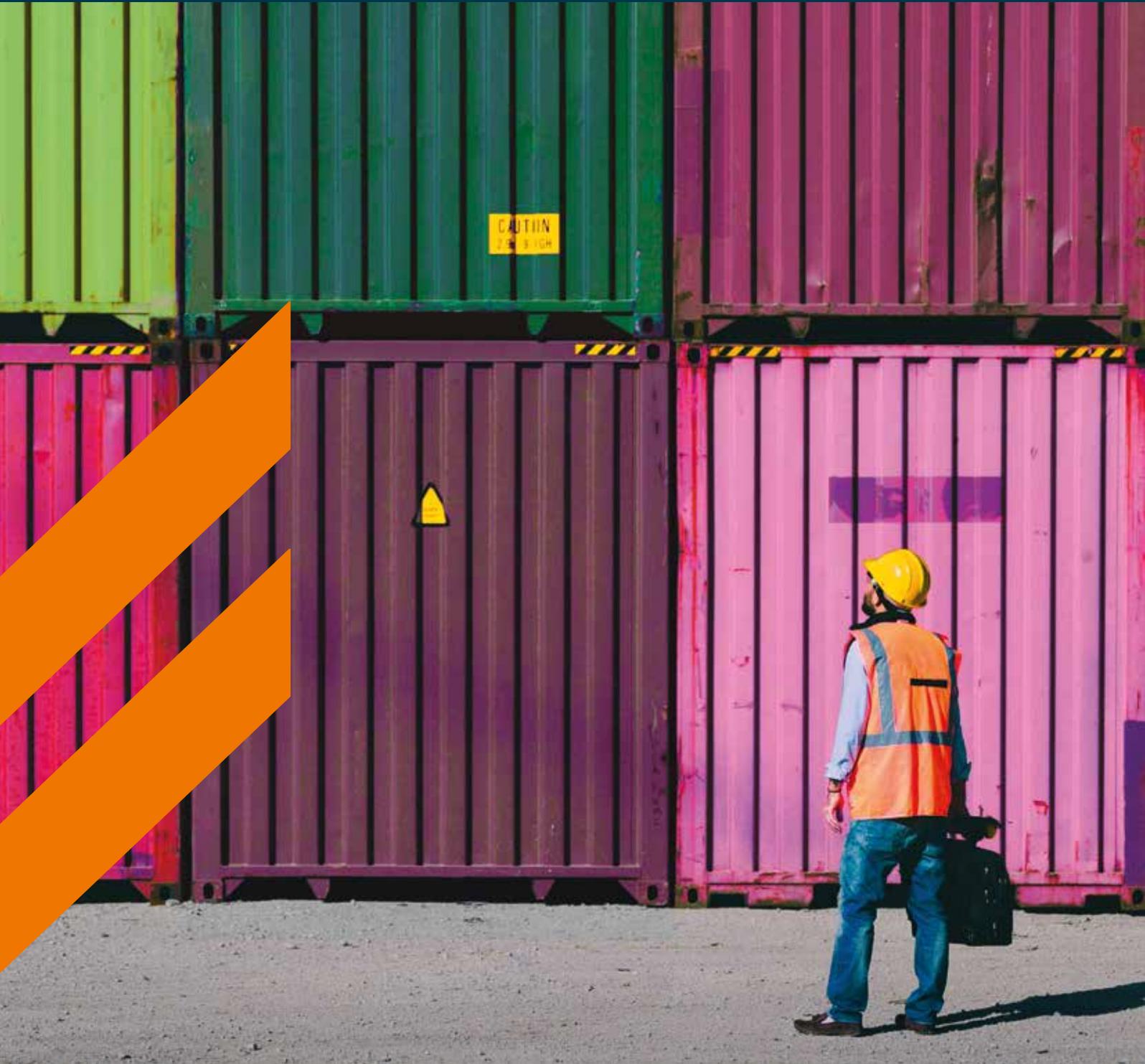
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Stella Maris is a Catholic charity supporting seafarers worldwide.

We provide practical and pastoral care to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, belief or race. Our port chaplains and volunteer ship visitors welcome seafarers, offer welfare services and advice, practical help, care and friendship.

Stella Maris is the largest ship visiting network in the world, working in 332 ports with 227 port chaplains around the world. We also run 53 seafarers' centres around the world.

We are only able to continue our work through the generous donations of our supporters and volunteers.

➤ To support Stella Maris with a donation visit www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk/ways-donate

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Pg 2 Stella Maris.



GALVESTON, TEXAS USA

➤ The Port of Galveston is located on the north side of Galveston Island in the Gulf of Mexico off the Texas coast. Over the years it has gone through many evolutions in cargo and vessel types. Currently the Port of Galveston is very diverse with vessels such as tankers, reefers, bulk carriers, ro-ro vessels, research vessels, passenger ships, and a fleet of fishing and shrimping vessels.

Port ministry actually began in the port of Galveston, Texas well before the Apostleship of the Sea came into being. The first priests to visit ships in our port were in 1839. The Archdiocese of Galveston- Houston has had a steady Catholic presence on the docks in Galveston for over 181 years! Of course, 100 of those years were with an AOS presence.

The Galveston Seafarers Centre is an ecumenical centre with many denominations contributing to the support of the ministry but the Roman Catholic Archdiocese is the greatest contributor by far. And there is only one chaplain serving this port, which is the Ecclesial Lay Chaplain, Karen M Parsons OFS. Karen has served as an AOS lay minister/chaplain since 1985 where she started in the Port of Detroit, Michigan in the Great Lakes. In 1992 Karen was the first Catholic lay woman appointed as a port chaplain in the United States when she was appointed the port chaplain of Galveston, Texas.

The Galveston Seafarers Center is open every day except Tuesdays

from 08.30- 15.30. Seafarers who would like to come ashore after 15.30 notify the manager of the centre and a volunteer driver is arranged to take them from their ship into the city. The Centre is teeming with seafarers on cruise ship days. In 2019 we had over 5,300 visitors in the Centre. There is free wifi, a chapel, table tennis, pool table, video games, library, snacks, commissary, transportation to local shops, and package delivery services.

Karen and AOS volunteer lay

ministers visit the ships in the Port of Galveston and Texas City, Texas as well as fishing vessels at 11 fishing docks along the Texas coast and make hospital visits to seafarers/fishers ill or injured. In 2019 Karen distributed ashes to 198 seafarers, 48 fishers, and 5 longshoremen on Ash Wednesday. Karen maintains a robust correspondence ministry with seafarers and has done so for the past 35 years. In 2019 she wrote 305 letters and over 3,000 emails to seafarers and their family members.



Galveston Seafarers Center

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Stella Maris provides seafarers with practical support, information and a listening ear

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Sunday at Sea with Fr Colum Kelly

PALM SUNDAY
5 APRIL 2020

GOSPEL MATTHEW 27:11-54

Jesus, then, was brought before the governor, and the governor put to him this question, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' Jesus replied, 'It is you who say it'. But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer at all. Pilate then said to him, 'Do you not hear how many charges they have brought against you?' But to the governor's complete amazement, he offered no reply to any of the charges.

At festival time it was the governor's practice to release a prisoner for the people, anyone they chose. Now there was at that time a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?' For Pilate knew it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over.

Now as he was seated in the chair of judgement, his wife sent him a message, 'Have nothing to do with that man; I have been upset all day by a dream I had about him'.

The chief priests and the elders, however, had persuaded the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus. So when the governor spoke and asked them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' they said, 'Barabbas'. 'But in that case,' Pilate said to them 'what am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all said, 'Let him be crucified!' 'Why?' he asked 'What harm has he done?' But they shouted all the louder, 'Let him be crucified!'

Then Pilate saw that he was making no impression, that in fact a riot was imminent. So he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd and said, 'I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your concern.' And the people, to a man, shouted back, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' Then he released Barabbas for them. He ordered Jesus to be first scourged and then handed over to be crucified.

The governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the Praetorium and collected the whole cohort round him. Then they stripped him and made him wear a scarlet cloak, and having twisted some thorns into a crown they put this on his head and placed a reed in his right hand. To make fun of him they knelt to him saying, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on

the head with it. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him.

On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross. When they had reached a place called Golgotha, that is, the place of the skull, they gave him wine to drink mixed with gall, which he tasted but refused to drink. When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothing by casting lots, and then sat down and stayed there keeping guard over him.

Above his head was placed the charge against him; it read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews'. At the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said, 'So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!' The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way. 'He saved others,' they said 'he cannot save himself. He is the king of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He puts his trust in God; now let God rescue him if he wants him. For he did say, "I am the son of God"'. Even the robbers who were crucified with him taunted him in the same way.

From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the

land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood there heard this, they said, 'The man is calling on Elijah', and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink. 'Wait!' said the rest of them 'and see if Elijah will come to save him.' But Jesus, again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

At that, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead, and these, after his resurrection, came out of the tombs, entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people. Meanwhile the centurion, together with the others guarding Jesus, had seen the earthquake and all that was taking place, and they were terrified and said, 'In truth this was a son of God.'

THE GOSPEL AND YOU

It seems a long time ago, but the cross I received on Palm Sunday has been with me all the weeks of Lent, reminding me that it is the symbol that connects all the events of the Easter story.

The first gospel of today has the crowds (spectators) shouting words of praise at Jesus on his entry into Jerusalem; and ends with the same people shouting "Crucify Him". Would I have been so fickle if I had been there?

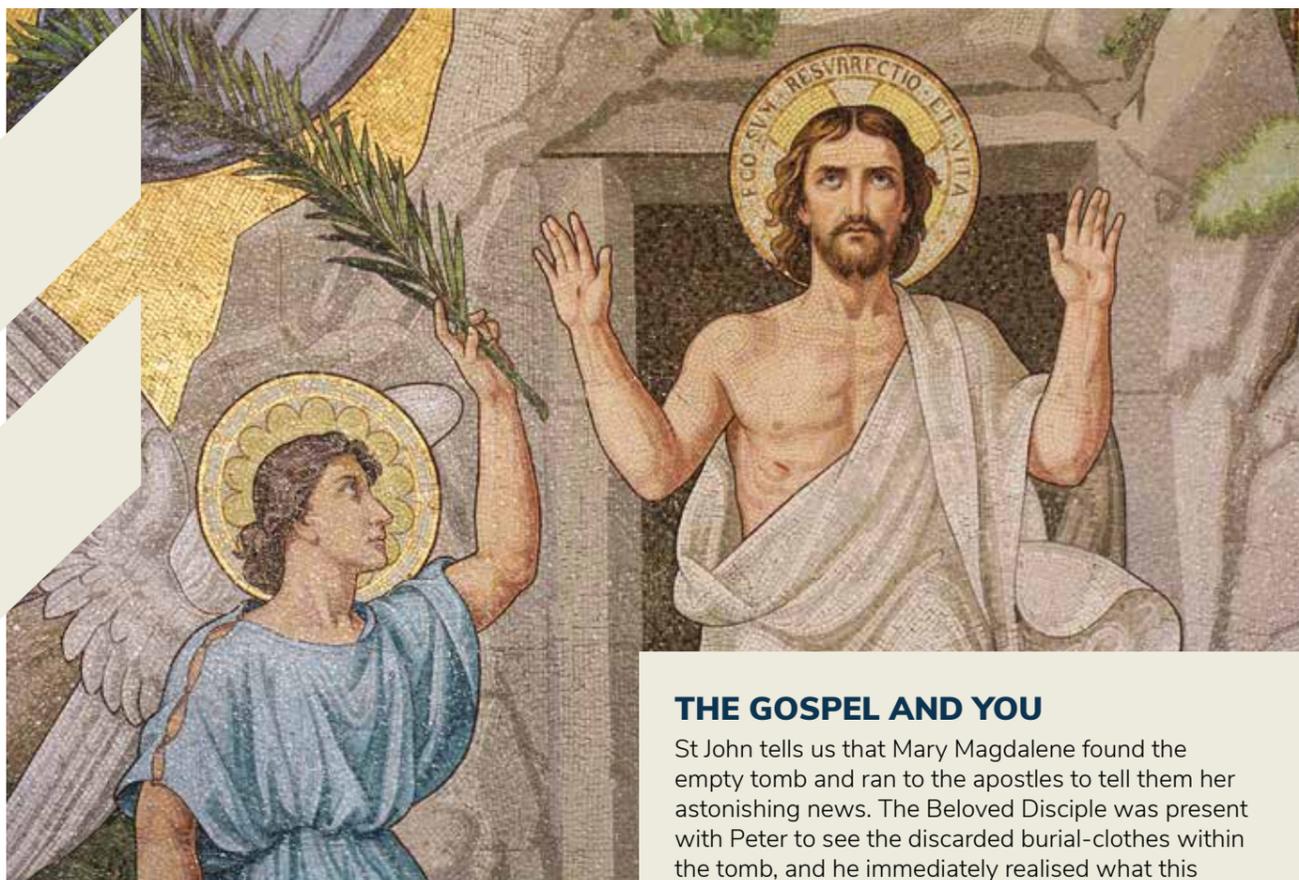
I Probably would.

And so we begin the most solemn week of the liturgical year. On Holy Thursday we will join him at table, to receive the gift of himself in the eucharistic bread and wine. In our reflections, we will go with him along the trail from the Upper Room to the Garden of Olives. There we will watch him struggle with fear and anxiety about the cruel death that awaits him. On Good Friday we will stand in spirit beside his mother at the foot of the cross, while he hands his spirit back to the Father who sent him.

But above all, this week I think on the loneliness of Jesus, one day proclaimed Messiah and yet as the week goes on, even his friends begin to desert him. Hearts of love turning to hearts of stone.

The readings of the Holy Week events sometimes reduce us to the role of mere observers rather than run the risk of questioning what the readings ask of us. Are we challenged by the passion and suffering of so many around us? Or perhaps it is easier to be a spectator.

At sea, there may be little opportunity to live out the events of Holy Week unless a chaplain comes aboard. But maybe the palm crosses from this or some years ago remind all of us, even in the lonely and isolated oceans, of this astonishing love for us.



THE GOSPEL AND YOU

St John tells us that Mary Magdalene found the empty tomb and ran to the apostles to tell them her astonishing news. The Beloved Disciple was present with Peter to see the discarded burial-clothes within the tomb, and he immediately realised what this meant: Jesus was risen from the dead.

The Gospel writers talk about the confusion of the disciples after the death of Jesus. I suspect that finding the empty tomb did nothing to lessen that uncertainty. It would only be later that the enormity of what happened would make sense to them and strengthen their faith and resolution.

On Easter morning, the stone was rolled away from the mouth of the tomb.

Jesus rose from the dead but that was not a one-off event. Resurrection is not just a historical fact, it is a continuing experience. We do not say "Christ rose;" we say "He is risen." He is here as our inspiration, our Saviour and Lord.

Resurrection occurs day after day, and yet we are often reluctant to accept it.

On good days we are thankful that the stone has been rolled away from our hearts and mind; we are set free. And yet how often we drag that stone or hatch back over us and retreat inside the darkness again.

Sometimes freedom is frightening because it brings with it obligations and duty to others, and we long to be enclosed in our own little world where nothing is demanded.

But as Pope Francis declares: 'Easter calls us to be to be people of joyful hope, not doomsday prophets!'

Because of the resurrection of Jesus, we can all have hopeful joy, and go out to share it with the world. We pray for the confidence to open that door of our room or cabin, and bring that joyful hope into the dark places of those with whom we are called to share.

Roll away the stone

EASTER SUNDAY
12 APRIL 2020

GOSPEL John 20:1-9

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb' she said 'and we don't know where they have put him.'

So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

**SECOND SUNDAY
OF EASTER**
19 APRIL 2020



GOSPEL JOHN 20:19-31

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.'

As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord,' he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his

hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you,' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!'

Jesus said to him: 'You believe because you can see me.'

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

"Happy are those that have not seen and yet believe"

THE GOSPEL AND YOU

In the gospel today we meet the character of Thomas, the man who originally missed out on an extraordinary encounter with the risen Christ because he was somewhere else. We know that the main group of disciples were hiding away in a safe place for fear of the Jews. When Thomas eventually came to join them, he noticed a change in them and heard their remarkable story of how the Risen Lord had appeared to them. But he could not bring himself to believe that such a thing could have happened.

We can understand Thomas for we too are people who want evidence to get to the truth rather than merely hear the claims of others. On our vessels we become tired of the boasts of others, telling us how we are missing out on something they have experienced. They can tell us all they want but we need more than words.

St John, in the Gospel today implies that the Lord meets us wherever we are. He takes us seriously whatever our fears and doubts. He wasn't angry that Thomas doubted, but accepted that he was in

that frame of mind and acted gently.

Thomas needed to see for himself and to touch the Lord, no words could ever replace that. He wanted solid proof, and there's a side of us that needs it too.

We have great faith in those we love but maybe, even there, we need reassurance that our faith and trust are not misplaced. For seafarers, being away from home on long voyages brings its moments of doubts when we least expect them. Have we misheard or misunderstood something in a call to a loved one?

The doubts may linger until the next call, maybe months away, when things can be put right.

The Lord allows us to have doubts and they don't matter if we can evoke Thomas's final words of faith in the Risen Lord.

"My Lord and my God!"

May that always be our great prayer of faith and trust in a God who never doubts us, even for a second.

Hope revitalised

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER
26 APRIL 2020

GOSPEL Luke 24:13-35

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.



THE GOSPEL AND YOU

In Luke's Gospel, we hear the story of two dispirited disciples walking away from Jerusalem towards Emmaus on Easter Sunday morning, unaware that Jesus had risen from the dead, "their faces downcast."

They were leaving their place of hope, leaving their faith dream, and walking away from the place where they felt that dream had ended in shame. They were leaving Jerusalem, not just the place but the hopes that had been spawned there.

What is "Emmaus"?

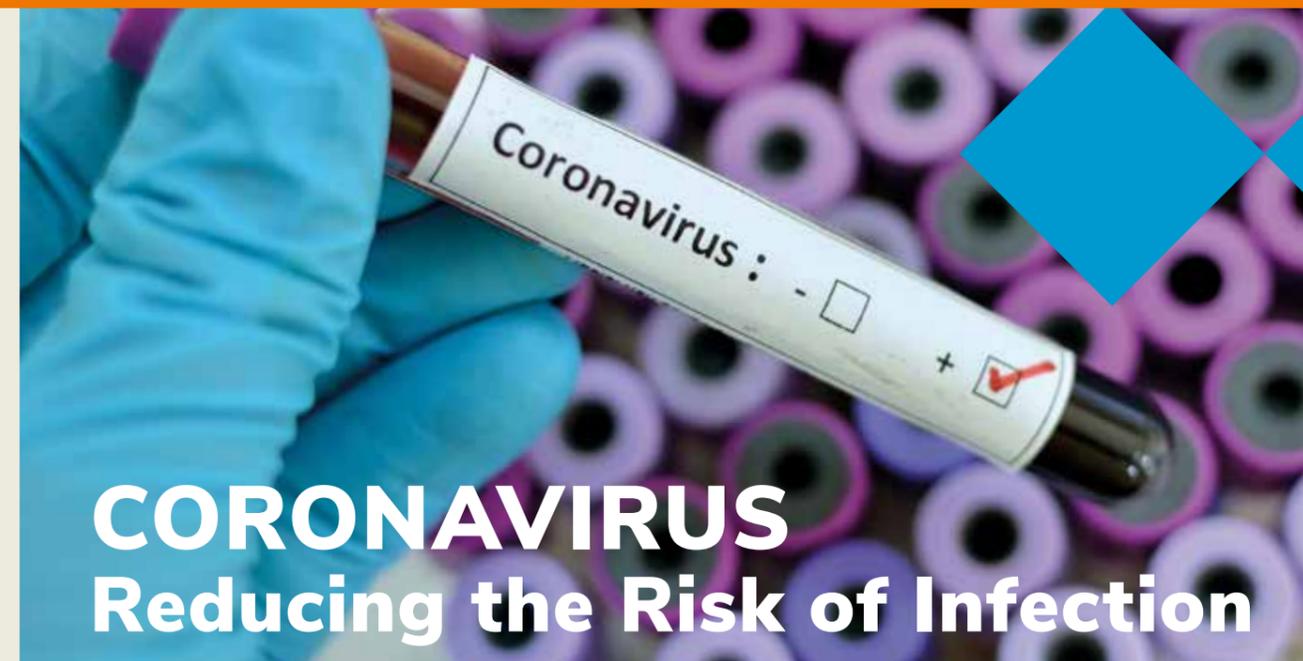
It seems there were several places called Emmaus, but it's thought that the one referred to here was a Roman Spa, a resort of sorts, a place of human consolation. So, these disciples were doing what we tend to do when we get hurt, walk away from the hurt to where we might find comfort.

Maybe it was because of their sadness that they did not recognise Jesus when he appeared to them on the road. He found them, opened the Scriptures for them, and turned them around. They never got to Emmaus; they didn't need to, for their hope was revitalised.

The good news is that Jesus finds us, on land or at sea, whatever road we walk in sadness, and maybe even in despair of dreams shattered. We are all on an Emmaus journey, a pilgrimage of faith. We may be upset by events in our own lives, disappointments, loss of a job, failure, collapse of a relationship, betrayal by friends. Everything, indeed, may seem very dark. And we may feel as hopeless as those two disciples did.

On ships we cannot walk away from sadness and despair, there is no Emmaus to walk towards. We are trapped maybe thousands of miles from the consolation of loved ones. But even there we must believe the Lord can come and walk beside us.

He may come in many ways; a kind shipmate who gives encouragement. Perhaps a verse of scripture may inspire us to believe in the Risen one who calls us in love.



CORONAVIRUS

Reducing the Risk of Infection

A new type of Coronavirus was detected since December 2019 in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. All cases in Wuhan were connected to the "Huanan Seafood Market". The source of infection is unclear. Human-to-human transmission is possible.

Signs and symptoms of 2019-nCoV sickness

- Fever
- Acute respiratory symptoms (cough, breathing problems, pneumonia)
- Average time from infection to disease: up to 14 days
- Infection from humans-to-humans may occur during incubation period (before persons shows signs of sickness)

Cases have been exported from Wuhan to other Chinese provinces and to Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Macau, Hong Kong, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Italy, USA, France and Australia. Further global spread to other countries is possible.

The Chinese authorities have installed TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS in the affected areas in China. Health measures, such as fever measurements are installed at Chinese airports, bus and train stations and at ports.

How to protect yourself from getting infected with 2019-nCoV

- Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands;
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough;
- If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your health care provider;

- When visiting live markets in areas currently experiencing cases of novel coronavirus, avoid direct unprotected contact with live animals and surfaces in contact with animals;
- The consumption of raw or undercooked animal products should be avoided. Raw meat, milk or animal organs should be handled with care, to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked foods, as per good food safety practices. Specific advice to shipping crew and companies (as of January 26, 2020)
- Do not restrict embarkation /disembarkation of seafarers in non-affected ports
- Do not restrict necessary ship visits by port agents, chaplains, service personnel and others.
- Do not visit Food Markets in China. Avoid provision of fish and poultry in China.
- Do not consume raw eggs, milk, meat.
- For galley: Observe strict food hygiene to avoid cross contamination
- Store facial protection for all crew (5 pieces /per person)
- Provide influenza vaccination, alcohol based hand rub and facial protection to ship inspector and other company employees who travel to China.
- If a person on board falls sick AND has been travelling to affected areas 2-12 days before embarkation, the person must stay in his cabin. Consult a Medical Doctor in the next port.
- If a sick person is on board of the ship, fill the Maritime declaration of health and notify port authority
- Further information: www.who.int

Courtesy of International Maritime Health Association www.imha.net. Information up to date at printing - March 2020

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER



Holy Week is the most intense time of the Church's year. During a week rich with signs, symbols, liturgies and readings we celebrate the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. We relive the paschal mystery in the liturgies of the Church and in our lives, passing with Jesus from death to the great feast of the resurrection: Easter. It is always good to go to confession in Holy Week, before Easter. The Sacrament of Reconciliation prepares us to live the Easter experience, passing from our sins to new life.

Easter the 'feast of feasts'

"Easter is not simply one feast among others, but the 'Feast of feasts', the 'Solemnity of solemnities'." Every Sunday Eucharist echoes the Sunday of the Resurrection and Easter.

Holy Week

Holy Week begins with the Mass of Passion Sunday, also known as Palm Sunday. We begin with a procession with palms, solemnly commemorating Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, happy to begin the week when Jesus was to complete his work as our Messiah. In Holy Week we listen to the entire gospel account of Christ's passion twice: from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark or Luke according to the year, on Passion Sunday, and from the Gospel of John every year on Good Friday.

The Easter Triduum

From Monday to Thursday we can live our Lenten promises with particular intensity, and on Thursday we begin the great Triduum. The term Triduum means "three days." The three days are counted as the Hebrews counted their days, from sunset to sunset.

Each of those days "tells" a different part of the story of Jesus's saving action. The Church celebrates one liturgy each day. We should not think of the liturgies of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil

as three separate events, all three form part of a single extended liturgy. In fact at the end of the Mass on Maundy Thursday there is no dismissal and blessing and in the same way there is no formal beginning and end to the Good Friday liturgy. This three-day liturgy concludes with the solemn blessing at the end of the Easter Vigil or at the morning Mass on Easter Sunday. So it is important to attend all three parts and it can be helpful to reinforce this unity by attending all three celebrations at the same parish community.

Maundy Thursday

In Thursday's evening Mass we remember in a special way, the institution of the 'Sacrament of sacraments', the Eucharist, at the Last Supper. There is also the 'washing of the feet', a powerful moment when we are reminded that the life of a Christian is to imitate Christ in humility and service. Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet also has a Paschal meaning as Jesus empties himself in order to take on all our sins. "He emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave." (Ph 2:7)

After the Mass of the Lord's Supper the Blessed Sacrament is brought to the altar of repose and reserved there. We are encouraged to stay after the Mass for a time of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, we watch and wait with Jesus as he asked his disciples to at Gethsemane.

Good Friday

On Good Friday, the Church instructs us all to fast and abstain from eating meat. As close to three o'clock (the traditional hour of Christ's death) as possible, we celebrate the Lord's passion. The altar is bare and the celebrant enters and makes the dramatic gesture of prostrating himself before the altar and all pray in silence together. The act of prostration is a recognition of the magnitude of what Christ did for us on the cross. We bow down and acknowledge what we are: fallen creatures whom only he can set on their feet.

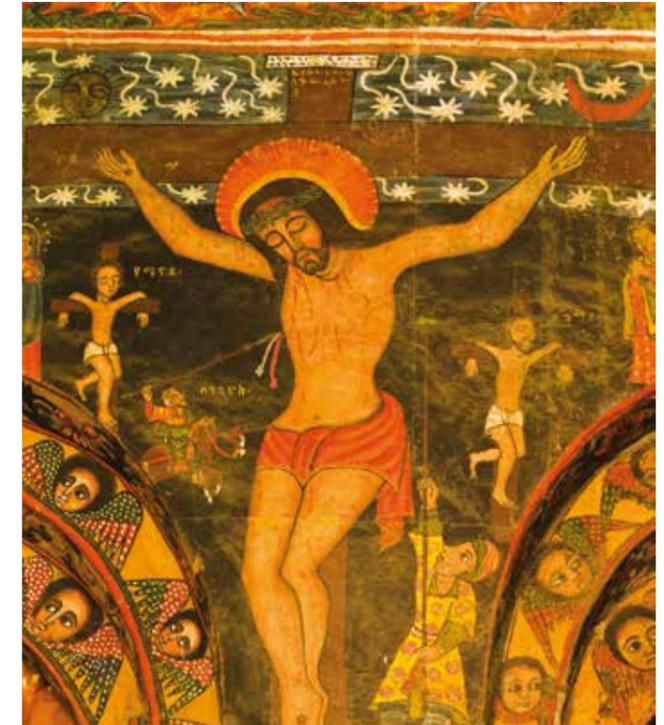
We then listen to John's gospel account of the Passion. It tells of Jesus freely submitting to all his sufferings to save us. Just as Christ died for the whole world, the Church then turns its prayerful attention to the whole world and ten solemn intercessions are made. The next part of the liturgy involves a solemn veneration of the cross. We each approach the cross and kiss it or touch it, venerating the wood on which hung our Saviour and the Saviour of the world.

It is not a matter of feeling sorry for Jesus, but of gratitude for his saving help. After the liturgy there are many forms of devotion and prayer among which one of the most beautiful is the Stations of the Cross.

The Easter Vigil

Though it is not now an obligation, the early Church continued to fast through Saturday. Our anticipation has not ended with the memory of Christ's death. In fact, our anticipation increases as we wait to celebrate the Resurrection.

Because we have a lot to do in this evening, we need time to do it well. Some may think of the Easter Vigil as just a longer Mass! This is only part of the story. There are things we do at the Easter Vigil that we do at no other time in the church year. We light the new Easter Candle from a large fire outside to remind us that Jesus is our light in the darkness, we then process into the darkened church. We hear the great hymn of praise called the



'Exsultet', in which we praise Christ for saving us. The hymn says that we would greatly prefer a fallen universe with Christ to a perfect one without him. "O Happy fault which deserved so great a Saviour."

The Season of Easter

It can seem that once Easter Sunday has passed Easter is finished, but the celebration continues for fifty days. Our celebration of Easter resonates throughout the rest of the year: full of gratitude for Christ's passion, joy in his resurrection and, strengthened by the Spirit, we continue our Christian journey.

Courtesy of the Catholic Truth Society www.ctsbooks.org



ALMIGHTY God, who through your Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death, and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: we pray; that as by your special grace you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



STELLA MARIS

