**Easter of 2020** - it’s safe to say, ***“We’ve never done it this way!”*** further, I pray that we’ll never have to do it this way again!

As I sit quietly in my office, today Monica and I ***should*** be busily rushing about frantically preparing for Palm Sunday, folks ***should*** be making plans to fold long palm fronds into traditional crosses. Barry and I ***should*** be going over music for Holy Week, I ***should*** be answering that age-old question, “Are we going to really wash each other’s feet on Maundy Thursday?” and “What does Maundy really mean.” and ….so many more questions. ***Instead***, it’s quiet in the office, Monica and I packed up her computer and other files yesterday and today, she is setting up her home office. I miss her! I miss the questions; I miss each of you!

As followers of Christ, Holy Week is a very important part of our lives …Crazy Christians! I invite you to walk Holy Week in the safety of your home. Walk with Christ, walk to the cross, sit beside the cross, wait and listen, wait…with the women and men, cry and mourn, be still and pray. **In the enclosed package you will find the resources to walk with Christ AND to celebrate the glory of Easter morning!**

Together, yet apart we will sing out “Alleluia! Christ is Risen” and the joyful response; “The Lord is Risen indeed! Alleluia!” will echo as together, yet apart, we celebrate! We celebrate the joy and love which are the very foundation of our Christian life. The Love of God lived out in the Love of Jesus. Yes, it is ALL ABOUT THE LOVE! Never forget the Love of God, the Love of Christ. The love that calls to us at this time and across the ages, calls to us in the sure and certain knowledge that, in the words of Beloved Julian of Norwich…“All will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of thing will be well”

And this prayer of St. Julian; **“God, of your goodness, give me yourself; you are enough for me, and anything less that I could ask for would not do you full honour. And if I ask anything that is less, I shall always lack something, but in you alone I have everything'.” Amen.**

When it is safe to gather in community, we **WILL** celebrate in ways that we have ***never*** done before. Until then, we will walk together and apart, in safety and support of one another. In his letter to the Clergy of this Diocese, Bishop Logan reminds us “that when Christ rose from the tomb that day, he did not return to just that place (nor did he return to just our church buildings), but he returned to the whole of Creation and will be found everywhere again on April 12 this year.”

In the meantime, let’s do **Easter Sunrise Morning Breakfast** at home…together and apart, see the attached for further info.

I remain yours in Christ’s love,

*MJ+*

**Here are the Collects for Holy Week and Easter:**

## Palm Sunday, the Collect

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Monday in Holy week, the Collect**

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Tuesday in Holy Week, the Collect**

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Wednesday in Holy Week, the Collect**

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Maundy Thursday in Holy Week, the Collect**

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Good Friday, the Collect**

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Holy Saturday (early in the day), the Collect**

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**The Collect for Easter Morning**

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**EASTER SUNRISE BREAKFAST AT HOME**



**Building Faith, A MINISTRY OF VIRGINA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, Traci Smith**

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” *1 Peter 1:3*

**First Light of Easter**

Getting up before dawn to watch the sunrise is a special treasure that is not easily forgotten in life. This Easter morning tradition of a sunrise breakfast creates a sacred space in which memories are cultivated for life. Some families already have this tradition and gather together in community for a sunrise service. For those who don’t, however, why not do it at home? Breakfast can be as simple or elaborate as you wish. The most important element is simply gathering together as a family and enjoying the time together.

**Materials Needed:** Breakfast foods**;** Gospel Reading: [John 20: 1-18](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20%3A1-18&version=CEV) *(below)*

**How To Do It**

1. The night before, set the table. If possible, consider setting up outside on a balcony or deck, or near a window to see the sunrise. Also, prepare as much of breakfast ahead of time as possible. Breakfast can be as simple or elaborate as you like.

2. Plan to wake everyone in time to be ready at the table about 10-15 minutes before sunrise. On April 12, 2020, the sunrise will be at 6:30 a.m.

3. Serve breakfast and have everyone seated. Begin with a prayer of your own or use this one: **“God of darkness and light, we give you thanks for this Easter morning. As we sit here in the dark, we are excited to experience the resurrection in a new way as the sun rises and light fills the sky. Help us to have a meaningful breakfast together as a family. Amen.”**

4. Begin to eat breakfast together and have someone read the passage slowly and deliberately.

5. Read the first line again: “Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark…” (20:1a, NRSV). Is it still dark outside? This is the time of day when Mary went to the tomb. Ask, *“How do you think Mary felt when she went to the tomb in the dark?”* If you are able to eat outside, take note of what sounds you hear. Is it quiet? Is it noisy?

6. Enjoy breakfast together and notice as it gets brighter and day breaks. Share any thoughts and experiences that come to mind. Ask questions that occur to you or use one (or more) of the following:

* What part of the Gospel reading is most interesting to you or sticks out the most?
* Does the light happen all at once, or does it seem to get light outside gradually? What does this tell us about the resurrection?
* In the reading, Mary calls Jesus ‘teacher.’ How is Jesus a teacher to you?
* How do you think people felt when they realized that Jesus was alive? Did different people feel differently?
* ‘Resurrection’ means coming back to life. What are some things that remind you of resurrection in the world?

7. Close your time together with a prayer of your own or use this one: **“Thank you, God, for this resurrection breakfast, a time to focus on you and the mystery of resurrection. Help us to celebrate Easter and to share its message of hope and promise. Amen.”**

**Gospel Reading**

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.’ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ She said to them, ‘They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.’ When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?’ Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, ‘Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni!’ (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” ’ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’; and she told them that he had said these things to her.