

Dear Friends and Visitors

The Lord Be With You

Our 40 day journey of Lent is completed. The last weeks were marked with special events in nature. Two successive ice storms, long heavy rains with record flooding, a ball of lightning which struck a tall pine tree just out side our infirmary wing, all led to Easter Sunday. The lightning split open the trunk from top to bottom.

Holy week was more peaceful-Palm Sunday commemorating Our Lord's royal entry into Jerusalem; the Paschal Trideum celebrating the final days of His earthly life and mission. Now we enter the 50 days of Paschal time from Easter Sunday till Pentecost.

A number of Assumption Abbey Associates were here celebrating the final days of Lent with us. Loretta Sellers brought 2 baskets of Easter treats-one marked "sugar-free"; the other marked "sugar-laden". Just now only one of the baskets has been opened. The Monks, no doubt, will open the other, when they run out of sugar. Wally, with his diabetes will start on the "sugar-free" sooner.

Fr. Donald's jonquils are blooming yellow all along our paths and roads to help us rejoice in Christ's Resurrection. The Vietnamese sisters from Springfield call Fr. Donald, "Fr. Alleluia". He can say his favorite word in the liturgy again.

Bro. Lazarus has been losing more chickens to raccoons, possums, and a black snake. Finally there were only 2 roosters left, Poindexter and Fruitcake. They turned into very street-smart chickens. They flew over their high fence even with clipped wings, spent the days eating from the dog and cat bowls, chasing the birds from their seed and then roosted at nights up in a thick bush or low tree. Unfortunately they left their mark around the bakery, which would make our food inspector unhappy. We now have no more chickens.

Each of the 4 Gospel writers gave his own special view of Our Lord's royal entrance into Jerusalem. St Mark, shows Jesus always tell people not to advertise Him (The Messianic Secret), but on Palm Sunday He takes the initiative, sending two disciples to procure a colt. The disciples cry, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our Father David which is coming!" They still expect an earthly political kingdom.

St. Matthew has a donkey and her colt, to show Jesus fulfilling the OT prophecy, "Behold you King comes, meek and humble, riding on a donkey and colt. The people say that this is the

prophet Jesus of Nazareth, from Galilee. Moses had promised that God would send them a prophet like himself; to whom God would speak face to face, and who would teach with authority.

St Luke's crowd of disciples are shouting, "Peace in Heaven. Glory in the highest!" They are echoing the angels' song at Bethlehem. Yet Jesus weeps over Jerusalem, saying, "If only you know the things that are for your peace, even today-but they are hidden from you...you did not know the time of your visitation." Then he drives out the sellers from the temple that same evening.

St. John for his Gospel, has the great crowd in Jerusalem take the initiative by cutting palm branches and going out to meet Jesus as He comes to the city. The religious leaders say, "Look, we can do nothing. The whole world is going after him."

The evangelists are telling us that the Messiah is a different kind of king, who, comes to fulfill God's promises and plan of peace for all people, but it will be through purification.

The Holy Spirit also inspired each Gospel writer to treat the Resurrection in his own personal way

Mark tells us that the women found the stone rolled back from the tomb and an angel says, "You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen. He is not here. Go tell His disciples and Peter that He goes before them to Galilee. There they will see Him, as he has told them." Here Mark cuts off his Gospel. The women run away saying nothing to anyone. This challenges us. Do we really believe in Christ and try to live His Gospel message, or do we run away, saying nothing to anyone; out of cowardice or human respect?

Matthew tells us pretty much the same, except the women run with fear and joy to tell the disciples the good news. Our Lord confirms their faith by meeting them on the way. In Galilee the apostles and all the disciples see the Risen Christ, who tells them that, all the power in heaven and earth is given to Him! They should go and teach all nations His Gospel, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is with them always, to the end of time.

Luke describes appearances not in Galilee, but around Jerusalem. He gives Mark's message of faith—believes the eye witnesses and Matthew's missionary command to preach repentance of forgiveness of sins in Jesus name to all nations. But he adds Jesus showing His disciples that Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms all foretell that the Messiah must suffer and so enter into His glory. Our Lord also instructs them to wait for the Promise of the Father. Then He blesses

them and is taken up into His full glory in Heaven.

John has the Risen Lord appear first to Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb. That evening He comes to the Apostles, gathered behind locked doors. He gives them His peace of forgiveness and full reconciliation after abandoning Him. Jesus tells them He is sending them, just as the Father sent him. He breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive or retain, they are forgiven or retained." Thomas was not there and was so upset that he refused to believe without touching Christ's wounds. A week later (Mercy Sunday) Our Lord comes again, and tells Thomas to see and not be unbelieving...blessed are those who do not see, but yet believe the eye witnesses. Then Thomas' reply goes beyond every other response, "My Lord-My God!"

The crucified and risen Jesus is God Himself, God the Son, come to redeem and to forgive us...come to save us and to give us eternal life with Himself in heaven. Christ's coming in Power and Glory begins his Resurrection.

In Our Risen Savior,

Fr Cyprian, Abbot