

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – APRIL 1, 2018

Dear Families and Parishioners,

Lazarus is dead. This word came to Jesus in the Jordan River Valley, a one day journey from Bethany. Jesus waited. Then he went to Bethany to console the sisters of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Four days had elapsed since Lazarus was put in the tomb before Jesus arrived.

“Lazarus, come out. The dead man came out.” Jesus returned him to his young sisters, Martha and Mary. What does death mean? Where was the person of Lazarus during these four days?

Jesus was a young lad. Unexpectedly, Joseph his father was brought home on a stretcher, mortally sick. There at home in the arms of Mary and Jesus holding his hand, Joseph breaths his last. Joseph is dead. What does death mean?

Jesus is on the cross, hanging between two robbers. He says to one, “This day you will be with me in paradise.” Jesus then gives up his spirit. Shortly afterward, the robber crucified next to Jesus also dies. What does death mean for Jesus? What does death mean for the thief who had faith? What is this paradise?

It is now the third day since Jesus dies on the cross. Two women go early to the tomb in order to better prepare the body. The tomb is empty and one woman runs to tell the Apostles. Mary of Magdela remains and Jesus appears and speaks to her, “Mary!” Mary throws her arms around Jesus and clings to him with all her strength. Jesus has risen. What does death mean?

Happy Easter! Jesus has Risen!

A Most Generous Parish

St. Joseph Parish is so positively generous. Let me count the ways. We were one of the first parishes to exceed the Bishops Appeal goal. I hardly ever spoke about it from the pulpit.

We have three major fund-raisers. There is the July festival, the Auction in late fall, and the Fish Fry during Lent. These fundraisers have gone to support the school especially in those lean days when the enrollment was dropping. Now the enrollment is growing and those fundraisers make it possible to project our school as the **Rural Oasis of Superior Education Blended with Faith**. Thank you.

The Sunday collections continue to be most positive. The number of parishioners coming to church has improved. The use of envelopes is up, many people are using the on-line giving, and this Village of St. Joseph becomes more and more beautiful and active, an oasis of peace and tranquility.

We also look to people outside of our orbit, especially in Haiti. We cannot help the Church in a major way worldwide, but we focus our efforts in a few places to make a difference. You are also very supportive of those special collections such as the Retirement Fund for the Religious. Thank you for being such a supportive parish and family. **May you and your families have a most happy and gracious Easter as we celebrate our long-term future in the Resurrection of Jesus.**