

DEACON TONY'S MARCH 31, 2024 HOMILY FOR EASTER SUNDAY

What a beautiful celebration day is easter. There is something about new life at springtime. I don't know how many of you have ever lived in a snow belt region, but if you have never lived in the Midwest then you don't know the glory of spring. You have to have lived for 5-6 months in snow, to truly know the feeling of living through it. You cannot have an appreciation of spring and easter until you have suffered through winter.

Let's look at the gospel first since it's chronologically before the letter of acts. Some studies of scripture tell us to put ourselves into the scene. So, let's see life at the start of the church. Mary Magdalene is up before sunrise while it was dark. Have you ever been so nervous that you can't sleep? It seems like Mary Magdalene was having one of those nights.

She had grown dependent on Jesus for he had cast out seven demons from her. We can easily see her nervousness and inability to sleep, without having her spiritual mentor close by. When she saw the stone rolled away, she immediately goes to our Lord's leading apostles, Peter and John to tell them what she saw. The Lord has truly left us alone.

A side thought concerning the humility of John, when he got to the tomb before Peter, he waited and deferred to Peter, an act of respect for Peter who was later to become the first Pope of the Church.

Mathew 16:17-19 "You are the Messiah the Son of the living God"

Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood^{*} has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father.

And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church,^{*} and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.

I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.^{*} Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

The Father granted that Christ be visible, not to all people, but to his chosen followers who ate and drank with him and witnessed his divinity. His disciples are commissioned to further his Church (with the help of His grace) and to build up what came to be known as the "the body of Christ". **JESUS DID NOT ABANDON US BUT CALLS US TO BE FULLY ALIVE.**

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What is this precious message that can't be found in a book, in a movie or in a great homily?

It is an invitation to rise as Jesus did and follow the will of the Father for you personally.

It is to allow the will of god to show you the people and things in your life that can **BE HELPED BY ONLY YOU**. Maybe you need to visit with a relative and pray with them. Maybe that relative is a spouse or one of your children or a parent.

Or if you really want to extend yourself, you can go online to:

“[Volunteer network oc](#)” and they will introduce you to 60+ local non-profit organizations and how to be a part of one.

If you seek to understand God's will for your life, and follow it closely, then you will see the risen Jesus.

It is to fix our gaze on what is from above and not from what is on earth.

To Jesus, all the prophets of yesteryear up through today bear witness that everyone who believes in Him,

Will receive forgiveness of sins through His name.