

Consider this... unpacking Easter: Mystagogy

The gift of the resurrection is unlike the gifts we receive at Christmas, packaged all nice and neat. It is not something that we simply grasp and then move on as if nothing happened. Coming to appreciate the depth of Easter's meaning is more like peering into an infinitely deep well and finding oneself able to draw water and new life from it again and again. Indeed, there is much to fathom here.

Easter is 50 days long - you could say longer than Lent on purpose - to give us time to reflect and celebrate these Easter Mysteries. During this time of Easter, we follow the Apostles and the Early Church as they likewise needed to figure out how to come to terms with everything they experienced. "Now what?" seemed to be the unexpressed question on everyone's mind and heart. Some decided to visit the garden and cemetery where Jesus was laid to rest. Some decided to pack it up and go home taking the road to Emmaus. Some hunkered down in the Upper Room. Some shared stories. Some questioned. Some decided to go fishing. Jesus appeared to them on many occasions, helping them to understand their experience, helping them to find peace amidst their dashed hopes and grief, and eventually sending his Spirit upon them to help them go forward and carry on in the new life that had been opened up to them. And go forward they did! Despite all odds, the early Church took off and spread throughout the world because of their witness to the risen Christ and their service in his name. And even that took a lot of figuring out and discerning just how God was moving in their lives. That we follow along with the Acts of the Apostles is not so much a history lesson but a chance for ourselves to follow them as they began to understand for themselves just how the resurrection changed and transformed their lives forever!

This deepening of our experience has a fancy name in the Church: Mystagogy - the pondering and living out of the mysteries of faith as well as of those sacraments in which we encounter Jesus. Congratulations to all who made their Easter Sacraments, who have been Baptized and Confirmed and who receive their First Communion! Right now, Mystagogy is one of the most important things we can do, because Easter is not merely an end (of Lent, of death, etc.), but a beginning of something new. God has indeed done great things and has an awesome plan for your life that will fill you with joy! It's important that we take stock of these things for ourselves: How has God appeared to me in my life? In this liturgical season? In this past week? Right now? Where is God leading, that I may follow? What is the life that God has opened up for me? May we, like the apostles before us, come to know for ourselves that Easter joy and always witness to that by the way we live.

Peace,

Fr. Luke