

EASTER JOY

Our celebration of Easter was like no other. All of this is possible because Jesus is alive and loves being present to His people. I would like to thank our Deacons and Staff for making sure we could be as welcoming as we could be. A special thanks to the Knights of Columbus who each month come out, rain or shine, to manage the cars at the Parking Lot Mass. They also make sure everything is ready for the ministers when they come out with Eucharist. We were at capacity early this Easter and volunteers, with the help of technology, stepped up and made it possible to open up our 7:30 a.m. Easter Celebration to more parishioners. This could not have happened without the sacrifices of everyone involved to make their concerns known to me and suggesting we add Anniversary Hall seating for that celebration. It was a true testimony to the strength and perseverance of our parish. We are strong and our volunteers are fantastic.

This was an Easter like no other and we are blessed by the Real Presence of the Risen Lord.



Father John

A MERCY THAT IS DIVINE

We come to this weekend to watch Jesus reinforce what Thomas already knows that Jesus is alive. His profession of faith happens when all of the obstacles are lifted. Thomas had all of the tools. Thomas had the ability to believe. His need was to have the experience for himself not based on the testimony of others. He saw and believed. Those words were also proclaimed by the disciple at the tomb. God has given all of us the tools to come to our own belief in Him, His Divine Mercy, and His forgiveness His gift of faith. The challenge for us is to use those gifts, those tools.

I love to golf and if anyone has golfed with me they are aware that there are some things that I do or fail to do along the journey of following a white ball. Spin, trajectory, and ball flight are based on the speed of the club hitting the face, square at the moment of impact. One needs a clean golf ball, free from mud, scrapes from the asphalt, and grass stains because it allows the golfer to have a greater chance that with a good swing the optimum result will occur. The club grooves are there for a reason. They too should be clean to give the designated club the best opportunity to accomplish what it was made to do. All of these are tools. All of these help the golfer find confidence and reveal the kind of golfer one is. The swing pattern, tempo and follow through are enhanced when the proper tools have been used. This allows for the best result to happen.

When I golf, I never clean off the club after a swing. I never clean the ball on the green before putting it unless it really has chunks of mud on it. At times I use a range finder for distance, but sometimes out of laziness I just guess how far it is to the creek, sand trap or pin. By neglecting to use the available tools to help me, I fail to achieve the best outcome of play. In turn, I do not do as well as I could. Essentially when I don't use the given tools, when I don't stay disciplined and get complacent, I end up placing obstacles in my own way that keep me from being the best golfer I can be.

Spiritually sometimes we do the same thing. God has given us tools and disciplines to make us more aware of His goodness and the goodness of others. When we do not use them, when we get too lazy about them or feel we can overcome challenges by ourselves, we put up obstacles to spiritual growth. Thomas put up obstacles. He did not place himself in a great position to believe his fellow disciples when they told him they had seen the Lord. God overcame those obstacles by sending Jesus to make sure Thomas could embrace the belief he was supposed to. We are called to place ourselves in the best possible position using all the gifts and tools God has given so our belief can be strengthened.

God's Mercy is Divine. He longs for us to use the great gifts He has planted deep within each of us. May we not grow weary, may we not grow complacent, and may we not take for granted the power of His Merciful Love.



Father John Ouper