

Dear Padre

April 20, 2025

I was baptized as a baby, but I never really went to church. Lately, I've been attending Mass. Are there steps I should take before I receive Communion?

The first step is to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation (confession). This is a wonderful opportunity to be officially welcomed back into full practice with the Church. After such a long absence, it is important to examine your conscience and celebrate the forgiveness of the Lord before you receive holy Communion.

I would also recommend that you “beef up” your understanding of what it means to be a practicing Catholic. You might do this by participating in your parish’s process for the Christian Initiation of Adults (called OCIA or sometimes RCIA). The Liguori Publications program, *Journey of Faith*, is one resource used by many parish communities. Another possibility is to use some of the resources offered online, such as Bishop Robert Barron’s *Word on Fire* website, which has a fine reputation.

I am happy you have responded to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit within you and answered the call to deepen your spiritual practice and journey. The Church needs you. The people of God welcome you. You are beloved among us, and your response in faith is a powerful witness, a reminder to those who may be tempted to take for granted the gift of faith. Thank you. ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / DearPadre.org

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Today as we celebrate the feast of Easter, like Mary Magdalene and the Disciples we find the challenge of also seeing and believing the resurrection.

As you place your gift with the St. Vincent de Paul Society you help those who are poor and hungry to “see and believe” in the Resurrection.

“...He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.” (ACTS 10:38)

We can’t give what we don’t have. Open your heart to receive God’s love, mercy and forgiveness. Then, show the same to others. As God’s adopted sons and daughters, we are made in His image and likeness. As Pope Benedict XVI says, “we are made for greatness.” Let our lives in Stewardship reflect His light to others. Pray to live a grateful and generous life. Strive for greatness! We are made for more! We are made for God!

Good News!

April 20, 2025

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord (C)

Acts 10:34a, 37-43 / Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8 / Jn 20:1-9

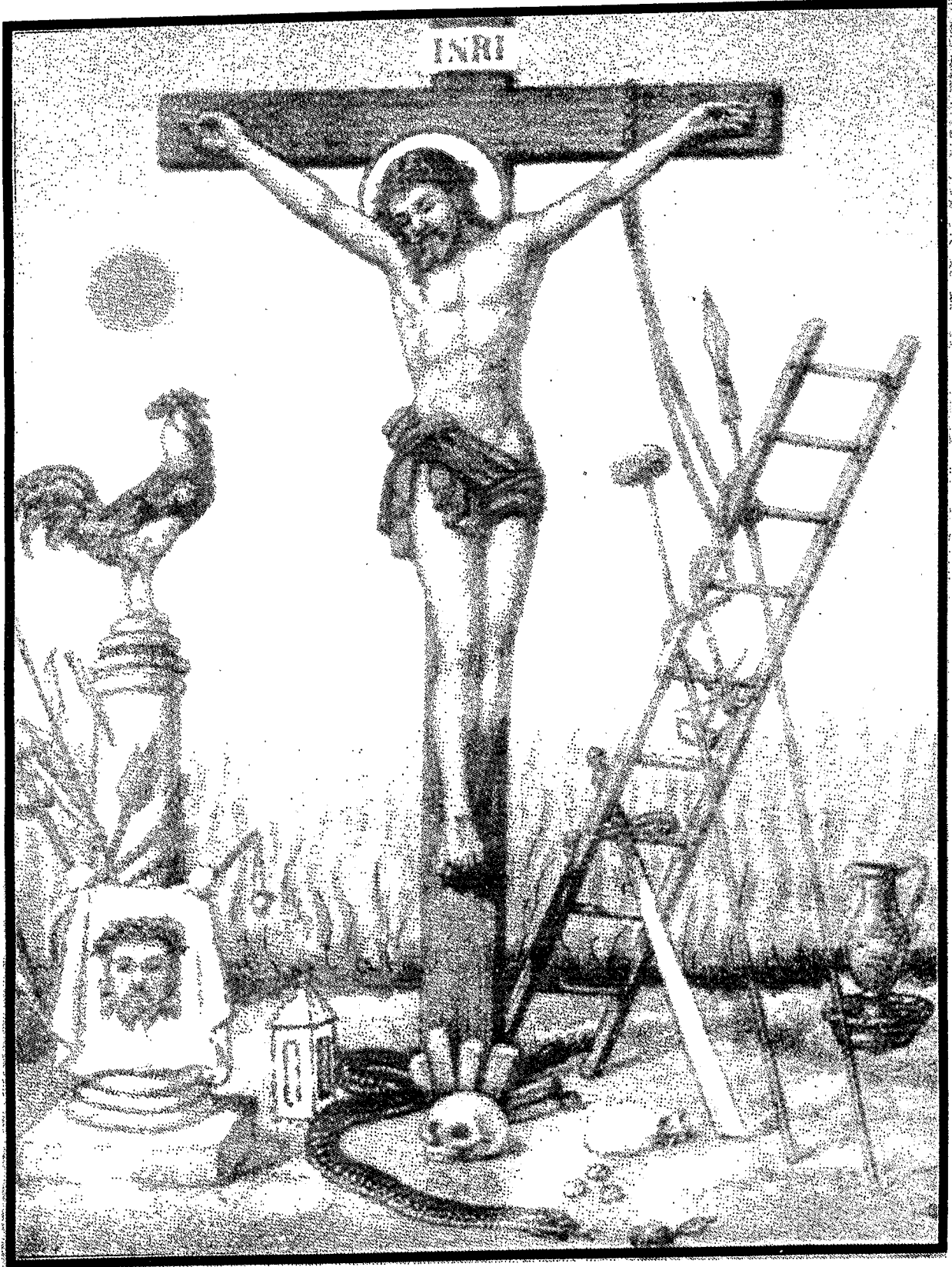
FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Looking for proof of the resurrection is like looking for proof of love. Sometimes, we realize only gradually—bit by bit—that we are loved. John’s Gospel abounds with images of light and darkness. So when this Sunday’s Easter Gospel recounts Mary of Magdala going to the tomb early in the morning while it was still dark, the gospel is not simply marking the time of day. It’s noting that what was taking place was before they believed in the resurrection, when they were still in the dark. All sorts of hints about the resurrection begin to occur: Mary sees the stone rolled away, Peter and the other disciple go to the tomb and find the burial cloths. They see the cloth that had covered his head rolled up and set aside. No apparition of Jesus, no men in white garments, no angels. Only hints that with the resurrection of Jesus, God has made all life new and destined for resurrection.

What, then, might one do who is plagued by doubts? Look for hints of resurrection, of life coming about where one expects only death (as if to symbolically enter the tomb). What types of hints? Going for counseling, as frightening as that may be, and finding peace. Talking through a problem in marriage. Finding that empty-nest-ing gives way to new life. Discovering retirement’s gifts. Making a dreaded move to a new city or school. The resurrection of Jesus means God makes all life new. We only need to see it and discover that, bit by bit, it leads to faith. ●

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*"I have looked at Him,
I have loved Him,*



And I have understood;

An Easter Promise

If we but had the eyes to see
God's face in every cloud,
If we but had the ears to hear
His voice above the crowd
If we could feel His gentle touch
In every Springtime breeze
And find a haven in His arms
'Neath sheltering, leafy trees . . .
If we could just lift up our hearts
Like flowers to the sun
And trust His *Easter Promise*
And pray, "*Thy Will Be Done*",
We'd find the peace we're seeking,
The kind no man can give,
The peace that comes from knowing
He Died So We Might Live!