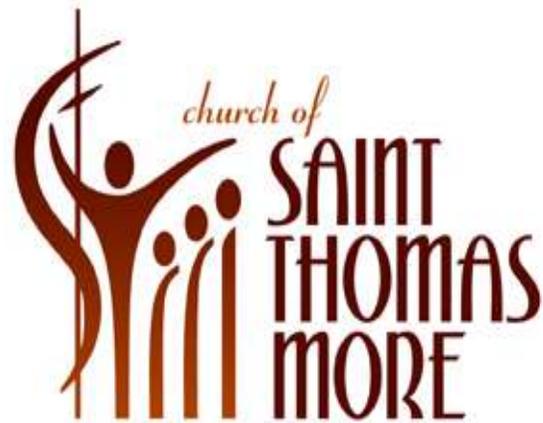


Easter – Singing Our Alleluia!

No day of the year inspires so much joy and hope than Easter Sunday. No other day offers the incredible good news that Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead!

When the disciples went to the tomb early in the morning, they could hardly believe what they found! Yet, their experience began for all of us the great unfolding of our salvation in the Risen Lord.



The celebration of the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday are just the beginning of a full season of joy. For Easter is not one day or one solemnity—it is a 50 day celebration, and the fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday together comprise what the Church calls "the great Sunday".

We used to call these next few weeks the Sundays "after" Easter. Lent was seen as the time "before" the feast to prepare, so the time "after" was needed to complete the celebration. The Sundays following Easter are no longer termed "after" -- for they are the Sundays "of" Easter. They are a complete unit, forming one season of exaltation at the triumph of Jesus over sin and death. Emphasizing Easter as the great feast of 50 days confirms the paschal mystery as the center of our Christian year.

Here at St. Thomas More, our Easter candle, lighted for the first time from the new fire of the Easter Vigil, burns bright for all our liturgical services and stands near our Baptismal font to welcome us to the celebration. The color of the vestments for the season is white, and our environment of bright flowers reflects this season of new life, fulfillment, rejoicing and joy. Our music for this season is full of Alleluias, and images of water and light.

The readings of the next seven weeks reflect the excitement of the early Church. Unlike most of the year, when our first readings come from the Old Testament, during the Easter Season we proclaim from the Acts of the Apostles and hear how the early Church spread the word of the resurrection and built a community of believers. Gospel readings recount the appearances of the Risen Lord and depict Jesus as a Good Shepherd who would not leave us orphans, but prepare a place for us with him in heaven.

The Easter Vigil was a night of new birth and new beginnings, as we welcomed dozens of new members to our community. The great season of Easter continues this celebration of new life in Christ; let us cry out with joy – Alleluia!

Every Sunday is Easter Sunday

At St. Thomas More, we celebrate every Sunday as the commemoration of Jesus' Resurrection, and we have become a year-round Easter People. Many people live out their Baptismal call as witnesses through service to all of us in the liturgy.

Fr. Jim Turner and other priests lead our worship, inviting us into full, conscious and active participation. They, along with our Deacons, break open God's word in their engaging and challenging homilies. Our lectors also study the Scriptures, so that each of them can bring the Word of God alive through their proclamation.

Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharistic share more than the Body and Blood of Christ – they share themselves, as members of the Body of Christ. Servers assist the priests and deacons at the altar to make our celebrations prayerful. Ushers, that first line of hospitality when you enter the church doors, are always happy to assist with directions and emergency care.

Music ministers, from cantors to choir members to instrumentalists, all help us to (in the words of St. Augustine) "pray twice". Our song is our prayer, and our music enhances all that is proclaimed in both word and action.

There are many people who work tirelessly behind the scenes to help our celebrations come alive – from those who decorate our worship space, to those who set up for each mass, to those who run our sound.

Most importantly, we have you – members of the assembly. Your participation in the liturgy is essential. By your presence, you proclaim to all those around you that you truly believe in the fullness of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus, his life, death and resurrection.

Open your hearts and lives to experience this fullness of our Risen Lord, and allow the energy of this great celebration to create within you a new, vibrant and committed disciple of the One who walks and journeys with us as Easter People!

Steve Raml
Director of Liturgy & Music