



The newsletter of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter, District of Oceania – Easter 2022



From the District Superior...

*Exsúltet iam angélica turba
cælórum: exsúltent divína
mystéria: et pro tanti Regis
victória tuba insonet salutáris.*

*Let the angelic choirs of heaven
now rejoice; let the divine
mysteries rejoice, and let the
trumpet of salvation sound forth*

for the victory of so great a king.

With these beautiful words the Deacon proclaims the news of the Resurrection at the beginning of the Paschal Vigil liturgy. Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

And with these words, dear faithful, we enter a new time, a new season, a new perspective on our fallen world. A world, which, despite its all too obvious defects and sinfulness, is now redeemed. And not just redeemed, but now also filled with Grace. A world washed clean and renewed. As the deacon goes on to remind us the sanctifying power of the night of the Paschal Vigil: “dispels wickedness, washes faults away, restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners, drives out hatred, fosters concord, and brings down the mighty.”

We, then, should be people who are filled with joy and what God’s power has done and can do. Yes, we may have to wait and also to suffer for a time, but we have confidence that God does hear our prayers, and answers them. Sometimes in the most unexpected ways.

The members of the Fraternity of St Peter and those entrusted to our care, were filled with joy at the Holy Father’s decree in February this year, which re-affirmed our Constitutions, our use of the 1962 liturgical books and our pastoral mission within the Church. A time of some darkness and uncertainty has passed, and there is light and

clarity once more. *Deo gratias!*

The tradition is that Christ appeared first to his mother, before appearing to the other women and the disciples. One can only imagine what that meeting must have been like! We are mindful of Our Blessed Mother’s prayerful presence in the life of her Son, From the Annunciation and Nativity, through the Passion and Resurrection to Pentecost.

It is no coincidence that the decree of Pope Francis reaffirming the Fraternity’s charism and mission was signed on the 11th February, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and the day we finished our world-wide novena to the Immaculate Heart. We owe Our Lady a debt of gratitude for her maternal care and intercession. Thank you!

Thank you also for your continued support for the FSSP in Oceania and beyond. We could not do what we do without you. Earlier this month Rev Nathan Pospichil was ordained to the diaconate at our seminary in the US, and next month will see the ordination to the priesthood of Rev Deacon Noel Soares in the USA. With his seminary studies completed Rev Soares will be returning to Oceania after his ordination, and we look forward to having him in our midst, labouring in the vineyard of the Lord.

There is still much work to be done. After the Resurrection, the apostles did not sit around reminiscing about the past and indulging themselves in a bit of self-congratulation! Far from it - They got to work! Preaching the Gospel, wining souls for Christ and tending to those who had been given to them. We too are called to spread the joy of Easter in our world, relying on the power of God who can do all things. May the prayers of Our Blessed Mother inspire and sustain us to spread the message of the Gospel. *Ora pro nobis!* May God grant you and your loved ones a joyful Eastertide!

Fr. Michael McCaffrey, FSSP
District Superior.

Victimae Paschali Laudes: The Sequence for Easter

Latin Sequence for Easter

Víctimae Pascháli laudes
ímmolent Christiáni.

Agnus redémit oves:
Christus ínnocens Patri
reconciliávit peccatóres.

Mors et vita duello confluxére mirando:
Dux vitae mórtuus regnat vivus.

Dic nobis María, quid vidisti in via?

‘Sepulcrum Christi viventis, et gloriam vidi resurgentis:
Angélicos testes, sudarium, et vestes.

Surrexit Christus spes mea:
praecedet suos in Galilaeam.’

Scimus Christum surrexisse a mórtuis vere:
Tu nobis, victor Rex, miserére.

Amen. Allelúja.

Translation of the Sequence¹

Christians, let us offer the sacrifice of praise
to the Paschal Victim.

The Lamb has redeemed the sheep:
Christ the innocent one has reconciled
sinners to the Father.

Death and life have struggled in spectacular battle:
The champion of life, having died, yet reigns living.

Tell us, Mary, what did you see upon the way?

‘I saw the tomb of the living Christ and the glory of His rising:
(I saw) the Angelic witnesses, the shroud and the linens.

Christ my hope has risen:
He shall go before His own into Galilee.’

We know that Christ has truly risen from the dead:
O victorious King, have mercy upon us.

Amen. Alleluia.

1. This is my own translation, which matches the article (I think).

The ‘Sequence’ is an interesting facet of the liturgy, peculiar to the Roman tradition and arising in the last two centuries of the first millennium. Such was their popularity that by the mid-16th century there were sequences for almost every Sunday of the liturgical year. In 1570, the liturgical use of sequences was restricted to just four of these texts: *Victimae Paschali* for the octave of Easter, *Veni Sancte Spiritus* for the octave of Pentecost, *Lauda Sion* for the octave of Corpus Christi, and *Dies irae* for All Souls’ Day and Requiem Masses that immediately follow a death. Then, in 1727, to these was added the *Stabat Mater* for the new feast of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady.

As the name suggests, the ‘sequence’ (ultimately derived from the verb *sequor*, meaning *to follow*) always follows the Alleluia appointed for the Mass (or, in the case of the *Dies irae* of the Requiem Mass, the Tract). In this light, we should see each sequence as the sung expression of a greater, more elaborate, Gospel procession, of the sort which often took place on these days in the Middle Ages, celebrating the unique nature of the liturgical day at hand. Let us, then, examine the Easter sequence, *Victimae Paschali laudes*, and its connection to the Easter season.

Among other things, what is most striking about the text of this sequence is its frequent use of contrary terms which are linked, in doing so giving voice to the profound nature of a season which celebrates the great paradox of Christ destroying our death by His own, yet, in the midst of this, restoring our true life by His resurrection. In addition, we see allusions to a ‘layering’ within the tradition of the Passover and the Paschal Lamb which is so crucial to the Paschal mystery.

The sequence begins in a pointed way – even more

so in the Latin than in most English translations: the verb ‘*immolare*’ also means to shed blood ritually. This verb brings to mind the Hebrew Passover’s bloody sacrifice of a lamb, which, when eaten at the Passover by the Jewish people, gave sustenance at the level of the body (and, when the historical event of Passover actually occurred, the blood of the lamb on the doorposts ensured the preservation of the lives of all within those houses). However, it obviously also ties into the depiction of Christ as the Paschal (or Passover) Victim and Lamb, which is the dominant theme of the Easter Sunday Mass; seen in the fact that the phrase ‘Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus – Christ our Pasch is sacrificed’ appears in four different places: the Epistle, Alleluia, Preface, and Communion verse. Here, then, we see Christ the Paschal Lamb – in both contrast to and correlation with – the Passover lamb, Who gives life to the Christian at the level of the soul, as the perfect sacrifice offered to the Father for all sins, thereby bringing about our reconciliation to the Father.

The ensuing stanzas reinforce, again and again, with both a striking simplicity and deep profundity, that what ought to be a contrariety of things are in fact united and given great depth and new meaning by Christ in the light of the salvific action of His holy passion: ‘the Lamb has redeemed the sheep’, ‘the sinless one reconciles sinners’, ‘the leader of life, having died, reigns living’; then we see the ‘spectacular’ clash of life and death – all of which call to mind the great paradox of what the passion of Christ is, and what it achieves; that is, in the midst of what seems to be abject failure, the redemption of all mankind is in fact being brought to its culmination.

From the fourth stanza we change tack, as it were, to the testimony of St Mary Magdalene, who first saw Jesus risen (at least as far as Scripture is concerned). What follows is a summation – brief but powerful – of the Gospel accounts of Sts Mark and John, detailing those things which contributed,

Fraternity leads Adelaide Youth Activities



Subdiaconate Ordination

With gratitude to Almighty God, we congratulate Nathan Pospischil from our Parramatta apostolate who was ordained to the subdiaconate on Saturday 12th February 2022 in Nebraska. Please continue to pray for our three seminarians – Nathan, Jeremy and Rev. Mr Noel Soares.



in no small way, to the wonder of Easter Sunday and belief in the resurrection: the tomb of Christ Who lives, His glory as now risen, the angelic witnesses, and finally the two burial cloths which survive to our day, the shroud and head-cloth – and which should contribute in like manner to our own wonder at the great mystery of the events of the Holy Triduum.

Our beautiful sequence ends with the conclusion of Christ's friends: 'We know that Christ has truly risen...' which we must make our own. And where we began the sequence with reference to Christ as *victim*, we end it with ascribing to Him *victor* – the victor over death, over sin, over the reign of the evil one. The last juxtaposition of what seems to be contrary forms the 'bookmarks' of our sequence. Death is not and cannot be the end of the story, for our victorious king now reigns for ever, interceding for us constantly. May your joy in this Easter season be complete, and may your love for our risen Lord ever increase!

by Fr Brendan Boyce, FSSP



In mid-January the Holy Name Youth Group in Adelaide held two Activity Days for children aged 8-17. After starting with an early morning hike at Mt. Osmond accompanied by their chaplain, Father Thomas Sofatzis FSSP, children then returned to the church for a Holy Hour and some engaging meditations and personal testimonies prepared by the youth leaders. The next day began with Holy Mass before children headed to Latitude Adelaide, a popular indoor trampoline park, afterwards returning for lunch and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the church. To finish off the day, children and youth leaders alike participated in an epic water balloon game in Linde Reserve. Thank you to all those who made it a big success!

Easter Sunday

The mystery of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the very foundation of our Christian faith. Unfortunately this truth has been challenged even by Christians themselves, and in the Catholic Church by clergy and theologians. One of the objections they raise against the truth of the resurrection is that nobody saw the actual moment of the resurrection. There were witnesses who saw the risen Jesus but no witnesses who saw Jesus rising. But then there were no witnesses who saw God in the very moment of creation. It was not possible for there to be any witnesses to the actual moment of the resurrection because the very act itself of resurrection was too tremendous, it transcended every human capacity for vision and comprehension. We remember what happened to St Paul on his way from Jerusalem to Damascus, when our Lord appeared to him in a blaze of glory, so dazzling he was blinded for some time. What more the refulgent glory of our Lord rising from the dead. On Good Friday, I mentioned how we can know about the actual moment of the resurrection from the evidence of the shroud itself. The imprint of the image shows us that it was produced by extremely intense radiation, something like the explosion of the two atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Not only that the mind was not capable of grasping the fact of the resurrection immediately. Our Lord, therefore, had to educate his disciples to come to terms, so to speak, with the reality of the resurrection. This is the reason behind the 11 appearances of his risen self to the women and the disciples. It as if he had to reduce, diminish, cut down the fulness of all that splendor and majesty of his victory over sin and death and hell to accommodate it all to the imperfection of human comprehension.

We see this in today's gospel. The resurrection, the reunion of our Lord's glorified and victorious soul with his dead body revivifying it was so tremendous, that inanimate nature itself was so exhilarated by it to the point of being in the throes of rejoicing that their lord and creator had come back victorious from the dead. Inanimate nature was in the throes of exultation, while human beings remained ignorant and even sceptical and incredulous of the resurrection. An angel rows away the tomb which has already been empty. The stone is rolled away because the tomb serves no purpose anymore. There is no dead body inside it. The holy women had to be prepared for the vision of the risen Jesus. They had forgotten his promise of the resurrection. They were coming to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus. In other words, they had been expecting a dead body. They had to be prepared therefore for the 'shock'

of the resurrection. They approached the tomb, are startled to see it opened, they peer inside, and see the angel. Even here we see how the angel had to somehow constrict himself into a visible and presentable form. Angels as we know are pure and luminous spirits. But here the angel takes on the form of a young man, dressed in white, although not every young man is an angel. He proclaims the good news of the resurrection to the women, telling them to spread the word.

One wonders why did our Lord not reveal himself immediately to the holy women? Before they see the risen Jesus, they had to see an angel first, because angels are a reflection of the risen glory of the risen Lord. The women had to first see what an angel is like, so that they would be ready, be prepared to see and recognize Jesus in his risen glory. This connects with the account of the resurrection in the Gospel of Matthew 28:2-10, where St Matthew tells us that as the women hurried away from the tomb, they are confronted by the risen Jesus.

We see here how these women had to be led psychologically from ignorance to amazement to fear to trembling to joy to faith and finally to vision. They had to be led gently from the known to the unknown, from the narrow limitations of their own understanding and perception and experience of things to transcend

For ourselves, we also need the same education, the same psychological preparation for a deeper and more intense and constant faith. We all have faith, we say the Apostles' creed, we confess ourselves openly to be Catholics, when we are challenge to activate the dynamism and the vitality of this faith in times of difficulty, we just can't bring ourselves to do it. We allow ourselves to be like the women, ignorant, uncertain, fearful. We are more enthusiastic about doing other things.

We have to be educated to believe, to have faith, and there is no other way than to believe and trust itself. We have no reason not to believe, we have every reason to believe. The greatest reason of all is today, Christ has risen from the dead. He has overcome all things. HE HAS OVERCOME, (JOHN 16:33). CHRIST's victory is accomplished. His victory over our sins is accomplished even as we struggle. How can we not surrender ourselves in faith and trust and confidence to a man who has been through hell literally and come back alive, and give evidence that he is not only man but God. CHRIST HAS RISEN AS HE SAID.

Fr Adrian Wee, FSSP