

Rainy Days and Mondays – Praise the Lord Alleluia

Read John 20:19-31

Have you ever noticed how much you miss things that you take for granted once they are taken away. We experienced this during the 40 days of lent. I know that lent is long passed and depending on when this is distributed the Easter Season is over.

Let me bring you back to Ash Wednesday. We were spirited and ready for the 40 day challenge of giving up chocolate, reading scripture more, going to Church more and so on. We heard our last Alleluia the Sunday before.

Each day we wandered through our own desert and finally journeyed to Palm Sunday. Oh how our hearts burst during Holy Week. We were anxiously waiting for the greatest feast of the year. Holy Thursday began our longing with the washing of the feet and service to our Lord. Then the serene quiet of Good Friday and the piercing nails and shouts of our Lord and those who loved him. The denials of those who loved him! Then, Holy Saturday and the awesome Easter Vigil with darkness, fire, candles, light, the beautiful thought provoking readings, baptism, bells ringing in the Gloria and the raise the roof Alleluia that had been absent these forty days. By next Ash Wednesday we won't recall how lonely we were without it. Easter Sunday came full of joy, more bell ringing and shouts of Alleluia. The singing was superb and everyone was filled with such great joy.

Then Monday, and what a let down! Nothing happened. I went to the church to meet for morning prayer. It was locked up. Using the code, I entered and the quiet was overwhelming. My songs and prayers reverberated on empty pews and walls. It reminded me of the empty tomb. Wait a minute! Every day this week after Easter is a solemnity, a day to celebrate and Easter continues until Pentecost on June 8, another seven weeks of rejoicing and waiting for the next great feast and ordinary time. We are called to holiness, but that is not perfection. Sometimes we cry out "Why have you forsaken me!" We admonish ourselves, but even Jesus cried out on that Friday 2000 years ago.

Those first weeks Jesus appeared, no one recognized Him. He left a sealed tomb; He came through locked doors and they did not know who He was. In each case He broke bread with them. They were in fear and confusion and He calmed them with "Peace to you.", and breathed the Holy Spirit into them. He promised peace at the last supper and continues to pray for it in His greeting.

He sends the disciples out. The Spirit is with them. The Christian community blossomed. Three thousand baptisms in one day, unnumbered believers added day after day. The most startling statement from Scripture, "There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or house sold them, and brought the proceeds of the sale laid it at the apostles feet. And distribution was made to each as any had need." (Acts 4: 23-25)

It is clear: when Jesus died and rose, He did it for us. He took us with him, breathed the Spirit on us and told us not to be afraid. He is with us always. He gave us the messages and laid the ground rules. He took us with Him and he took our sins and cleansed us.

Like the apostles and disciples we do not always recognize Jesus, we grow weary and are afraid. We become greedy with our possessions. We cannot make the statement, "There is not a needy person among us." If we read in James 2:14 -17 we know that having all this faith and not serving the poor to give their basic needs, we have done nothing. So, again we are challenged to go in Peace and serve the Lord and see Him in the eyes of the poor.

How can we keep Easter alive? We can start by getting rid of our rainy days and Mondays. Remember that each one of us rose with Christ. Fix our minds on our faith works and one day we may boldly shout, "My Lord and my God there is not a needy person among us."

Once your Faith comes alive you will want to serve and the love that is enkindling in us will show us the way and give us the strength. My dear Vincentians, Easter is forever and if your Faith is fired by love and your love brings you out to our friends in need who are among you and beyond then you will feel Easter, the risen Lord forever.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, my Savior, your victory over sin and death has carried me to the light and out of the darkness. Take away my rainy day and Monday feelings and strengthen my faith and help me to truly share in the power of the resurrection and help me bring that empowering light to my fellow Vincentian servants and those we serve. Amen.