



Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Dear friends,

Happy Easter! May the joys of Christ's resurrection be with you all as we celebrate these eight days (octave) of Easter.

I'm reminded of a quote from a movie – *The Grinch* – that my family watches annually:

It came without ribbons! It came without tags!
It came without packages boxes, or bags!

And he puzzled and puzzled, till his puzzler was sore.
Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before!
"Maybe Christmas," he thought, "doesn't come from a store.
Maybe Christmas... perhaps... means a little bit more."

Our Triduum and Easter celebrations came without so much of what we usually have present. Chanting the *Exsultet* – one of my favorite parts of the Easter vigil Mass – was simply not the same without your presence, your faces illuminated by candles as we opened the Mass together. And yet, Easter came – without brass, without violins, without our choirs, without processions, servers, candles, or fires.¹

While this Lent was perhaps the 'Lent-iest' Lent most of us have ever celebrated, this Easter is perhaps the most authentic Easter we've ever experienced. Much as He was arrested without company and died without His friends, Christ walked out of the grave alone. And He still chose to do it all – for you and for me – knowing that we would often be apart from Him in our circumstances and choices. He permitted Himself to experience the deepest of loneliness – that of the death of sinners – so that we wouldn't have to.

In the days and weeks to come, we will hear of Jesus' coming to His Apostles – and of His reassurances to them not only of His resurrection but His reassurance of His continued friendship and love for them. His compassion to Thomas in his doubts and the statement of faith He elicits from Peter are gifts not only to them but to us. We need not live in fear or doubt: Christ has conquered all!

Let us carry with us the flame of faith that we received at our baptism – the presence and gift of the Holy Spirit. It may be some time yet before the Body of Christ is physically united in one place, but even now Christ is in our midst, reminding us that He is risen – He is risen indeed.

Yours in Christ,

Father Maurer

¹ With apologies to Dr. Seuss