

Spiritual Readings for the month of April 2023

Please choose a reading and questions for reflection.

Reflection: On Power of Resurrection

*“Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.”
(John 20:1)*

Pope Francis writes in “The Joy of the Gospel”: “Christ’s resurrection is not an event of the past; it contains a vital power which has permeated this world. Where all seems to be dead, signs of the resurrection suddenly spring up. Each day in our world beauty is born anew, it rises transformed through the storms of history. Values tend to reappear under new guises, and human beings have arisen time after time from situations that seemed doomed. Such is the power of resurrection.”

Reflection Questions

1. How can you make the Resurrection part of your everyday life?
2. How do you hope to share the Easter joy with your Neighbours in Need?
3. Can you reflect on the empty tombs in your life and see the true Presence revealed in them? What in your heart and life might the Lord wants you to change? How do you turn your heart in anticipation of Easter?

Let us pray... Lord, renew us with this blessed day – our faith’s cornerstone – and help us to be vigilant for our Neighbours at all times. Allow ourselves to offer comfort and peace willingly to others, as we need them for ourselves, so we give those away to those we meet, especially those living on the margins.

- Vincentian Bro. Jose Torres, St. John of the Cross, Peel North Council

Let Us Dream, The Path to a Better Future

Excerpt from Pope Francis' 2020 book, page 113

It's the same problem as ever: poverty conceals itself in shame. In order to see, understand, and feel it, you have to come close. You can't know poverty from a distance; you have to touch it. To recognize and come close – that's the first step. The second step consists in responding practically and immediately, because a concrete act of mercy is always an act of justice.

But a third step is necessary if we are not to fall into mere welfarism: to reflect on the first two steps and open ourselves to the necessary structural reforms. An authentic politics designs those changes alongside, with, and by means of all those affected, respecting their culture and their dignity. The only time it is right to look down at someone is when we are offering our hand to help them get up. As I once put it in a talk to some religious men and women: "The problem is not feeding the poor, or clothing the naked, or visiting the sick, but rather recognizing that the poor, the naked, the sick, prisoners, and the homeless have the dignity to sit at our table, to feel 'at home' among us, to feel part of the family. This is a sign that the Kingdom of Heaven is in our midst."

Reflection:

In our experience as Vincentians of coming close and touching, what do we see about poverty?

How does the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul invite Neighbours in Need to sit at our table?

- Vincentian Kathy Haugh, Nativity of Our Lord, Etobicoke PC