

REJOICE IN THE GOOD NEWS

Today is called Laetare (Rejoice) Sunday. It's a day for rejoicing in anticipation for the coming of Easter Sunday. We are midway through Lent and if we have stopped our fasting and sacrifices, we are encouraged to renew them again today! The greatest gift that God has given us, is to be able to rise from the dead. The other great gift is our faith, which enables us to respond to Jesus' teachings and to spiritually see the enlightened road ahead of us that leads to heaven. There are many road, but only one road leads to eternal life. On this narrow road of light we encounter Jesus, who lovingly guides His followers on the grace-filled path to eternal life. On the other wide open dark road, we encounter the devil, who deceitfully leads his followers to eternal death. God is very *generous with His divine mercy, because when we were dead through our sins, He generously brought us back to spiritual life with Christ through the Church. It is through the grace of God that we have been saved* (Eph 2:4-10).

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR DESTINY

Jesus says (Jn 3:14-21), that if we don't believe in Him and His teachings then, *on these grounds alone is sentence pronounced*, on ourselves beyond the grave. If a sentence of eternal imprisonment in hell is handed down to us by God on Judgement day, we have no one to blame but ourselves. Jesus tells us today that *no one who believes in Him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because they have refused to believe in the name of God's only Son*. To believe is to live by our faith and the commandments of God. There is no point in saying we believe, and at the same time, don't bother going to Sunday Mass. The person who lives by the Truth comes out into the true Light of Christ to be a witness to the faith. God the Father, loves us with His open Heart on the Cross, in the Person of Jesus Christ. He was lifted up *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in Him*. Like a serpent that sheds its skin, we too must shed the skin of our sinfulness to grow in Christ through sacrifice and fasting. We must share this Cross with Christ to achieve salvation. We are not to defile the temple of our bodies that were consecrated to God in our baptism (2 Chron 36: 14-23). The Church exists not to condemn us, but to teach us how to achieve eternal life. Its mission is to prepare us for the Second Coming, to be ready and waiting for the hour of our death. This will be the most important hour of our lives. The other great gift that God has given us are our Mothers, who thankfully, chose to give us life. **Happy Mother's Day!** Congratulations to all who voted No. It won! God bless, Fr. Brendan.