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MARCH 2022 *Quarterly Letter*

The Historic Events of Easter Week Live On Through Our Faith

By Christine Corbett Conklin

As we approach Holy Week and Easter, it is important to remember that the historic events we commemorate from so long ago are not over and done. Rather, they continue to live on today through our Catholic Faith.

the Way of the Cross that Jesus trod, “there’s all this jostling going on, so reminiscent of what it was like ... with a certain degree of severe reality.” There is the sound of native languages, the smell of spices being sold in booths along the route, the sense of history imbedded deep in the very soil.

In Jerusalem, Father has visited the “Cenacle,” a room on the upper floor of a two-story building which is believed to be the site of the Last Supper (and the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles). It is near the Church of the Dormition which is recognized as the site where Blessed Mother died or “fell asleep” as the word “dormition” suggests.

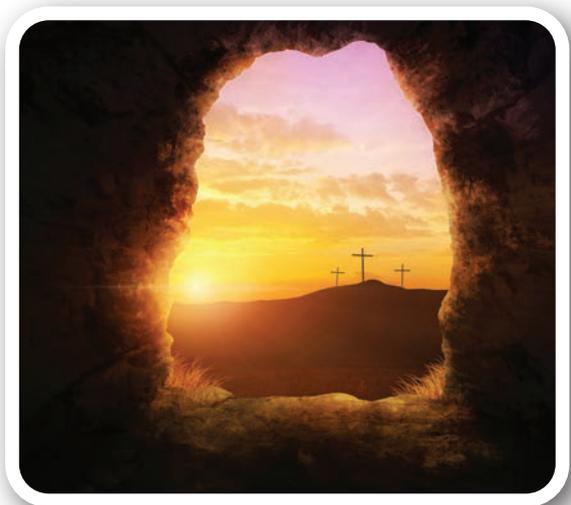
Father also visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the site where Jesus is believed to have died and risen, with an encased part of the stone which is said to have closed His tomb and a covered rock bench on which Christ’s body was placed.

These experiences “make the Scripture more here and now,” he noted.

On one memorable trip, Father recalls celebrating Mass in a nearby Franciscan church, where people of French, American and Portuguese nationalities came together, calling to mind the coming

of the Holy Spirit in which everyone understood in his own language.

However, you don’t need to travel to

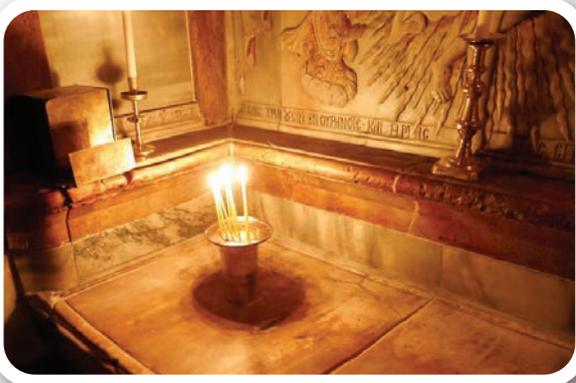


the Holy Land to believe, to appreciate and to live the miracle of our Salvation. You don’t even need to see artifacts such as the Shroud of Turin, the remarkable, scientifically tested burial cloth which carries an impression of Our Lord’s face and wounds.

“There are living signs within us of the Resurrection,” Father Keolker explained. “We are the signs of the Resurrection because of our Baptism.”

Through our Faith, “we become the ground, the place that keeps the memory (alive),” he said. We also have our own sufferings, such as what our world has experienced with COVID and international crises. Yet, “no matter the difficulties, we must be the people, the place, where the events (of Holy Week) are evident.”

So, this year, as we prepare for the “Holy Triduum” (the commemoration of the Last Supper on Holy Thursday, Good Friday’s somber observance of Christ’s death, and the vigil His followers kept for Him on Holy Saturday), let us hold tight to our Catholic Faith which lets us continue to live the miracle of our Salvation. Then, let us celebrate Easter with renewed joy, aware of the real and living presence of Jesus in our midst today.



The restored bench in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on which it is believed that Jesus’ body was placed and from which He rose from the dead.

“Our Faith is our link to that time,” observed Father Riccardo Keolker, senior priest in residence at St. Joseph Church, Kennewick. “We become the ground, the place that keeps the memory The wonder, the beauty, the impact of the Liturgy is that we make these events to be current events”

This spiritual reality, for Father Keolker, has been deepened through the numerous opportunities he has had to visit the Holy Land.

“It is sometimes said that the land is like the fifth Gospel – it gives such a vivid example of rooting in history,” he observed. Walking along



A portion of the actual stone said to have been rolled back from the entrance to Jesus’ tomb is encased for viewing.

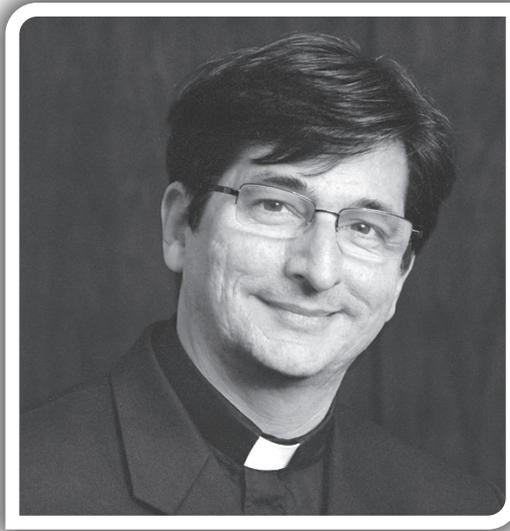
A Message from Bishop Tyson...

Dear Friends:

Our centerpiece this month is an interview with Father Richard Keolker on Holy Week. There is a bit of a backstory to Father Keolker and his active ministry here in the Diocese of Yakima.

Father Keolker had spent close to 30 years as a member of the faculty and formation team at Mount Angel Seminary, our Benedictine regional seminary in the Portland Archdiocese. As a child, I recall going to Mass with my grandparents where the much younger and equally energetic Father Keolker would preach and teach at St. Paul Cathedral.

Needless to say, I was delighted when during one of my recent seminary visits, he pulled me aside and told me he was ready to come back to the Yakima Diocese. He graciously returned to his hometown in Kennewick, where he quickly became part of the fabric of life at St. Joseph Parish, even in the midst of a global pandemic. Indeed, throughout COVID-19, Father Keolker had been doing reflections via Facebook as well as online scripture studies tied to the upcoming Sunday readings. He has become a popular homilist on Sunday and an attentive presenter in RCIA as well as



Bishop Joseph Tyson

other parish learning forums.

I bumped into Father Keolker a couple of weeks ago. I had been substituting for the Saturday evening Masses in Spanish and English for the parish priests there. I had just flown back from a visit with our seminarians in Mexico City and was breezing through Dillon Hall where key parish leaders were gathered for an appreciation dinner thanking the volunteers. There he was, holding court at a table of parishioners, both long-time and

new! It was really the first large event in the parish since the start of COVID-19.

His interview in this month's *Central Washington Catholic* opens up for us the rich meanings of Holy Week for us as believers. Yet underneath the interview lies a man who very much models his life and his priesthood on the dying and rising of Jesus Christ. This is what we do too. As Christians, we follow the pattern set by Jesus. As St. Paul preached to the Romans: "If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."

My hope is that as you read the various articles in this issue, be they Pope Francis' prayer of consecration, the upcoming Cor Christi summer camp, our upcoming Church Mission Congress on October 15, 2022 or our fun little pop quiz on the saints, you will see a church in Central Washington State modeling itself on Jesus, His dying, His rising and our unity with Him.

With every best wish and blessing!

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

Join In Prayer To Dedicate Russia and Ukraine to Blessed Mother *Continued from page 3*

Eliminate hatred and the thirst for revenge, and teach us forgiveness. Free us from war, protect our world from the menace of nuclear weapons.

Queen of the Rosary, make us realize our need to pray and to love.

Queen of the Human Family, show people the path of fraternity.

Queen of Peace, obtain peace for our world.

O Mother, may your sorrowful plea stir our hardened hearts. May the tears you shed for us make this valley parched by our hatred blossom anew. Amid the thunder of weapons, may your prayer turn our thoughts to peace. May your maternal touch soothe those who suffer and flee from the rain of bombs. May your motherly embrace comfort those forced to leave their homes and their native land. May your Sorrowful Heart move us to compassion and inspire us to open our doors and to care for our brothers and sisters who are injured and cast aside.

Holy Mother of God, as you stood beneath the cross, Jesus, seeing the disciple at your side, said: "Behold your son" (*Jn* 19:26). In this way He entrusted each of us

to you. To the disciple, and to each of us, He said: "Behold, your Mother" (v. 27). Mother Mary, we now desire to welcome you into our lives and our history. At this hour, a weary and distraught humanity stands with you beneath the cross, needing to entrust itself to you and, through you, to consecrate itself to Christ. The people of Ukraine and Russia, who venerate you with great love, now turn to you, even as your heart beats with compassion for them and for all those peoples decimated by war, hunger, injustice and poverty.

Therefore, Mother of God and our Mother, to your Immaculate Heart we solemnly entrust and consecrate ourselves, the Church and all humanity, especially Russia and Ukraine. Accept this act that we carry out with confidence and love. Grant that war may end and peace spread throughout the world. The "Fiat" that arose from your heart opened the doors of history to the Prince of Peace. We trust that, through your heart, peace will dawn once more. To you we consecrate the future of the whole human family, the needs and expectations of every people, the anxieties and hopes of the world.

Through your intercession, may God's

mercy be poured out on the earth and the gentle rhythm of peace return to mark our days. Our Lady of the "Fiat", on whom the Holy Spirit descended, restore among us the harmony that comes from God. May you, our "living fountain of hope", water the dryness of our hearts. In your womb Jesus took flesh; help us to foster the growth of communion. You once trod the streets of our world; lead us now on the paths of peace. Amen.

If you have been abused or victimized by a member of the Catholic clergy, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out.

The Yakima Diocese has a sexual abuse hotline for those who wish to report some incident concerning that issue as regards a bishop, priest, deacon or diocesan employee or volunteer. (888) 276-4490.

Central Washington Catholic

MARCH 2022 • Volume 63 • Issue 3

PUBLISHER

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson

MODERATOR

Monsignor Robert M. Siler

EDITOR

Christine Corbett Conklin

TRANSLATIONS

Indiana Blandón

The Central Washington Catholic (ISSN 0195-1831) is published monthly by the Diocese of Yakima, 5301-A Tieton Drive, Yakima, WA 98908-3493.

Submission schedule: Deadline for the submission of material is at noon on the first day of the month of publication.

Email: robert.siler@yakimadiocese.org

Join In Prayer To Dedicate Russia and Ukraine to Blessed Mother

Please join with people all over the world in praying for peace and protection for Ukraine. The following prayer to our Blessed Mother lets us unite in dedicating and consecrating our world, especially Russia and Ukraine, to her Immaculate Heart.

*Act of Consecration
to the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Basilica of Saint Peter
25 March 2022*

O Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, in this time of trial we turn to you. As our Mother, you love us and know us: no concern of our hearts is hidden from you. Mother of mercy, how often we have experienced your watchful care and your peaceful presence! You never cease to guide us to Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Yet we have strayed from that path of peace. We have forgotten the lesson learned from the tragedies of the last century, the sacrifice of the millions who fell in two world wars. We have disregarded the commitments we made as a community of nations. We have betrayed peoples' dreams of peace and the hopes of the young. We grew sick with greed, we thought only of our own nations and their interests, we grew indifferent and caught up in our selfish needs and concerns. We chose to ignore God, to be satisfied with our illusions, to grow arrogant and aggressive, to suppress

innocent lives and to stockpile weapons. We stopped being our neighbour's keepers and stewards of our common home. We have ravaged the garden of the earth with war and by our sins we have broken the heart of our heavenly Father, who desires us to be brothers and sisters. We grew indifferent to everyone and everything except ourselves. Now with shame we cry out: Forgive us, Lord!

Holy Mother, amid the misery of our sinfulness, amid our struggles and weaknesses, amid the mystery of iniquity that is evil and war, you remind us that God never abandons us, but continues to look upon us with love, ever ready to forgive us and raise us up to new life. He has given you to us and made your Immaculate Heart a refuge for the Church and for all humanity. By God's gracious will, you are ever with us; even in the most troubled moments of our history, you are there to guide us with tender love.

We now turn to you and knock at the door of your heart. We are your beloved children. In every age you make yourself known to us, calling us to conversion. At this dark hour, help us and grant us your comfort. Say to us once more: "Am I not here, I who am your Mother?" You are able to untie the knots of our hearts and of our times. In you we place our trust. We are confident that, especially in moments of



trial, you will not be deaf to our supplication and will come to our aid.

That is what you did at Cana in Galilee, when you interceded with Jesus and He worked the first of His signs. To preserve the joy of the wedding feast, you said to Him: "They have no wine" (Jn 2:3). Now, O Mother, repeat those words and that prayer, for in our own day we have run out of the wine of hope, joy has fled, fraternity has faded. We have forgotten our humanity and squandered the gift of peace. We opened our hearts to violence and destructiveness. How greatly we need your maternal help!

Therefore, O Mother, hear our prayer. Star of the Sea, do not let us be shipwrecked in the tempest of war. Ark of the New Covenant, inspire projects and paths of reconciliation. Queen of Heaven, restore God's peace to the world.

Continued on page 2



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Church Mission Congress Planned

Mark your calendars for the upcoming Church Mission Congress, scheduled for Saturday, October 15 at Holy Family Church, 5315 Tieton Drive in Yakima.

The Congress will provide an opportunity to discuss where we stand as a Church, in the Synod process involving the three elements of "Communion, Participation and Mission."

For more information, or to volunteer to help, contact Valeria Flores at valeria.flores@yakimadiocese.org or call (509) 965-7117.

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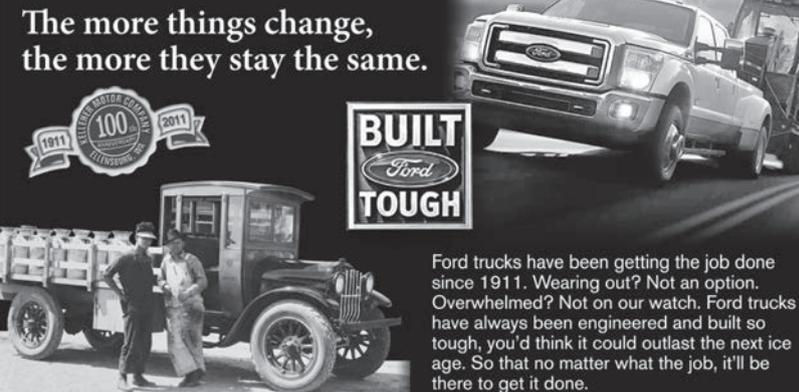
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The 'Saints of Spring' Offer Inspiration For Us All

There are many great saints who can give us inspiration, and pray for us, as we go through life. Here are just a few of the "Saints of Spring," those whose feast days are celebrated in this season.* How many can you name?

Answers follow at the bottom:

1.) April 7. Born in France in the 1600s, the child of a noble family, this saint is the patron of teachers. He helped educate poor children, established

teacher colleges and founded the group now known as the Christian Brothers.

2.) April 16. This saint was born in Lourdes, France, in 1844. At the age of 14, she saw a vision of Blessed Mother when gathering firewood. She was to have many more similar visions, two of which instructed her to drink of the water at Lourdes and to have a chapel built there. Miraculous cures have occurred at the site to this day.

3.) April 23. The child of Christians from noble families, this saint was born in the 200s A.D. There are stories of him fighting dragons – or perhaps just a crocodile that nested near a spring providing water to people in what is today a part of Libya. He bravely stood for his Christian beliefs, to the point of martyrdom.

4.) April 25. This first-century saint is noted for being the author of the Second Gospel. He was close to St. Peter, with the latter once referring to him as "his son." It is said that he did not personally hear Jesus speak, but



based his writings on Peter's teachings. He died a martyr and his relics, once stolen, are buried in the Venice cathedral which bears his name.

5.) April 28. Born in 1922 in Italy, this saint became a physician, particularly drawn to the poor, mothers and babies. She served with Catholic Action, a lay organization devoted to spreading Church teachings. As she and her husband were expecting their fourth child, she developed complications that ended with her sacrificing

her own life rather than having an abortion.

6.) May 15. This young Irish martyr lived in the 600s A.D. She is the patron saint of those with mental and nervous afflictions. Her father, overcome by



grief at the death of her mother, tried to marry her because she looked so similar, so she fled to what is now Geel, Belgium. Her father later found her, killed her when she again refused to marry him, and to this day, Geel residents care for strangers with mental illness.

7.) May 16. The colorful story of this saint includes him, as a young man in the 1200s, living in a hollow oak tree. He grew to form numerous Carmelite communities, in time becoming Superior General. In 1251, he had a vision of Our Lady holding a brown scapular. "He who dies clothed with this ... shall be preserved from eternal fire," she promised him.

8.) May 22. As an infant, this saint, born in 1381, reportedly had a swarm of white bees fly in and out of her



mouth without harming her. She was married young and helped her cruel husband reform before he died. She lost both sons to illness. She later entered a monastery, experienced levitation and received a mystical

forehead wound like that of a thorn from a cross of thorns. She is the patron saint of difficult marriages and parenthood.

9.) May 30. This French saint, born in 1412, lived just 19 years. She had visions of saints telling her to cast the British out of French territory, so she donned armor and forged into battle. She successfully helped regain territory in numerous battles. Following diligent attempts to question her holy intent, she was sentenced to death and burned at the stake in Rouen.

10.) June 13. Born in Lisbon, Portugal in 1195, this saint joined the Franciscan Order and became a friend of St. Francis of Assisi. He taught and was an effective preacher. When a novice stole a book of his, the saint reportedly prayed for its return and it happened. To this day, he is regarded as "the finder of all lost things."

Answers:

- 1.) St. John Baptist de la Salle;
2.) St. Bernadette; 3.) St. George;
4.) St. Mark; 5.) St. Gianna Beretta Molla;
6.) St. Dymphna; 7.) St. Simon Stock;
8.) St. Rita; 9.) St. Joan of Arc;
10.) St. Anthony of Padua

**Thanks to catholic.org for information on these and many other saints.*

Cor Christi Catholic Youth Camp Is Scheduled

There are still openings for the third annual Cor Christi Catholic youth camp, scheduled for June 19-24 at Lazy F Camp in Ellensburg. Formerly known as Central Washington Catholic Youth Camp, the session is open for young people entering fifth grade to those graduating from high

school in 2022.

This is a quality, week-long summer camp which will include daily Mass and Rosary, Adoration, Reconciliation, faith talks, plus the presence of priests and sisters. There also will be songs and games, swimming, inner tubing, a climbing wall, zipline,

and campfire every night. This year's theme is "Ocean of Mercy."

Registration is requested as soon as possible to ensure an available spot. Register at the new website, CorChristi.net/camp, or call Director Michael Drollman for details at (509) 699-1235.