

***Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of The Lord***  
***April 21, 2019***

*“The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want.”* (Psalm 23:1)

May I first begin by wishing you and your family a very joyful Easter 2019. In my mind, I cannot imagine the apostles or disciples believing Christianity would still be alive almost 2,000 years after that morning which found them staring at an empty tomb. It would be as unfathomable as you or I trying to imagine Catholicism alive and well on the planet Mars in the year 3,000. During these many years, since that first Easter morning, countless men and women (our brothers and sisters) have gathered to celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Today, we take our turn in joining with them to celebrate this glorious moment in human history; the moment in which we were all freed from the grasp of sin and death.

While reflecting upon this moment, our moment, in salvation history another thought occurred in my mind. It is true that we join with all Christian history today to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord. It is also true that we celebrate the end of the Lenten penitential season. We can now indulge ourselves again with those things we gave up for Lent. It was this thought which both enlightened and saddened me. We can now go back to doing what we had been doing prior to Ash Wednesday. However, should we go back?

For many, Lent was a time to mortify themselves. They freely choose either to give up a thing which provided them with pleasure and/or they choose to add something more to their already pressing schedule. Now freed from those obligations, should we cease these sacrifices or additions? My fear is: we could return to our old way of life as though Lent 2019 never occurred. Therefore, we would be no better now than when we started. If you took extra time in Lent to pray or attend an extra Mass, then why would you want to give these up? If you chose to sacrifice a pleasurable food or drink in Lent, could you not try to do without them for just another hour or day? If a person volunteered their time to help others during Lent, should they now choose to back away from those service opportunities? This is our dilemma.

Let us try to continue these virtuous activities which we added into our lives during Lent. This is the reason why I chose that first verse of Psalm 23 to begin our reflection. As Lent began, we wanted to be better, choosing to give up things or add things which would help us to be better. Why, therefore, should we lose the progress made when returning only means we will have to tread this ground again for Lent 2020? Let us strive to push forward, never returning to what was left behind.