

On behalf of our parish staff, I wish you a **Blessed Easter!** Easter comes very late this year, but it seems like spring is arriving even later. No matter what the weather – or any other external circumstance – I pray that you may experience the warmth of the Risen Jesus in your heart and your family.

During this past year and especially during the forty days of Lent, we have accompanied our catechumens as they prepared for the Easter sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. **Easter is the great moment to renew our baptism.** By that sacrament we enter into the life of Jesus. The joy of baptism was expressed by a German immigrant girl who embroidered these words on a sampler:

*I have been baptized.  
Even if I die, how can the cold grave do me harm?  
I know my homeland and my inheritance, which I have with God in heaven.  
After I die, there is prepared for me the joy of heaven and the robes of glory.  
I have been baptized.  
I stand in covenant through my baptism with my God.  
So say I always with glad lips  
In crosses, tribulations, troubles and needs:  
I have been baptized.  
I rejoice in that.  
The joy remains forever.*

Because of our baptism you and I also have a homeland, an inheritance, a covenant with God. No matter what trial or distress we face, that joy remains.

**I want to thank those who have worked so hard to make Holy Week special here at St.**

**Mary of the Valley:** musicians, acolytes, hospitality ministers, lectors, ministers of Communion, sacristans and all share their time and talents for the worship of God. I would also like to thank those express their Stewardship by the maintenance and repair of our buildings and the upkeep of our beautiful grounds. Last Saturday about seventy parishioners participated in our Spring Clean. Below are some pictures. I have posted others on my bulletin board in the north entrance of the church.

You will notice the work on the **Grotto of Our Lady of the Valley.** Our Boy Scouts did the basic landscaping work as an Eagle Scout project. James Yap, who is a landscape engineer, designed an arrangement of plants and flowers for Mary's Courtyard. Thanks to your support we have been able to purchase about a quarter of the plants. If you would like to provide one (or more) of the plants and flowers, please sign the cardboard display.

**Besides Mary's Courtyard we are making other improvements** to our parish buildings and grounds. These include our hall restrooms, carpet, kitchen, playground and other areas. I have been working with our Building Commission, Finance and Parish Councils to develop this

vision. During the month of May – in conjunction with the Annual Catholic Appeal – we will be giving a fuller presentation of these needs and how you can participate.

I would like to give a special invitation to attend this Wednesday's Generations of Faith. **Our topic for this month is: Being Truthful.** For the presentation to adults, I hope to address these questions:

- What does Jesus mean when he says “The Truth will make you free”? (The answer might surprise you.)
- How does this commandment relate to the others, for example, honor your father and mother, you shall not kill and you shall not commit adultery?
- When is a person justified in “setting someone straight”?

Besides giving the definition of “lying,” I will try to explain various sins against the Eighth Commandment: slander, revenge, failing to live up to promises, detraction, rash judgment and gossip. It should be an interesting evening. **Please come at 5:45 for dinner.** All are welcome: children, teens, young adults, married couples and seniors.

Some final notes: On Monday (April 25) we begin the second month of **Spiritual Adoption.** You can participate by saying the prayer to spiritual adopt a child. (Cards are available at the church entrances.) On May 1 Pope Benedict will beatify his predecessor, Pope John Paul II. We invite you to prepare for this moment of grace by praying the **Divine Mercy Novena** at 3 p.m. every day this week.

Eliseo, Jim, Miguel, Jesus, Juan (trimming tree) and Matt



Adrian, Jose, Adan Sr., Steve, Benjamin



Manuel Jr., & David



Nan mending finger on statue of Our Lady of the Valley



Church cleaning: Maria, Jessica, Nancy (even Samwise got into the act)

