

## April 13, 2020-Monday, First Week of Easter

### Easter season

Records show that Christians, besides celebrating Easter Sunday, celebrated a continuing Easter *season* as far back as the beginning of the third century.

Outside of Ordinary Time, it became the Church's longest season—a 50 day stretch from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. It was not a time for penitential practices. Fasting and kneeling were not permitted. It was a good time to exult in God's goodness.

Why is the Easter Season so long?

Because Christians believed that the Resurrection was just too big and too important to be celebrated for only one day, or even one week.

Why 50 days...not 10, or 20?

Because there was already in place a Jewish feast called "Pentecost" (a harvest festival) which took place 50 days after Passover. When Pentecost became a Christian feast celebrating the descent of the Spirit, Christians turned the time between Passover and Pentecost into the "Easter season."

**The symbol of the Easter season is the paschal candle. Consider having a special candle in your home to light during these 50 days. Symbols help.**

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***After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. (Mt. 28:1-2)***

At times like Easter there is something within me that wants to be hopeful. Yet I may be afraid to let it out, particularly when I have seen so many hopes dashed.

Hope is a tender feeling, easily bruised. When you hope, you are vulnerable. You can make a fool of yourself especially when your hopes do not turn out. When the pessimist turns out to be right, then you appear foolish, naïve. To have hoped and lost often makes us more guarded.

In the Bible, even those who suffer are able to hope because their hope is based upon what GOD can do, not what they can do.

Perhaps this Easter season, I should allow myself to hope. There is a reality of Good Friday which means that I accept the fact of suffering and failure.

But Easter is also a reality—it shows what God can do and it offers me hope no matter the situation.

*Spend some quiet time with the Lord.*