

EASTER SUNDAY (4/11-12/2009)

Acts of the Apostles 10/34-43, Psalm 118, Colossians 3/1-4, John 20/1-9

It's a fact, a sad fact indeed, one that does not afford us much comfort.

And on the very day when we celebrate the most important cosmic event of all – the resurrection of Our Lord and Master!

I refer to the great crowds of people who will fill our churches throughout this weekend, and whom we shall not worship with again until next Christmas.

(Every pastor finds himself wondering what he would do if all those people were regular attendees at weekend liturgies.

How could we accommodate them both outside and inside the church building?)

It's a problem that has been long with us and will, I am certain, reoccur again next year.

Somehow the message of Christ's death and resurrection makes only a limited impact on many Catholic people.

Why do you think that is? Is it that the message is "old hat", or irrelevant to peoples' lives?

Has the church (the preachers and teachers) not proclaimed it properly?

Has the level of religious belief dropped so low that people are just going through the motions, even on Christmas and Easter? Is it none, or all of the above?

Everyone has an opinion, I am sure,

And yet...and yet...something moves these twice-a-year Catholics to put in an appearance.

The resurrection event draws them to the Eucharist.

Maybe they can't explain it themselves, but there they are

While I find it sad, at the same time, I see hope in the events of Easter Sunday.

The Spirit of new life is at work, and perhaps people can't resist it whatever their motivation.

A nice spring day helps because it is the most appropriate metaphor for the coming of life after the long period of hibernation or death we call winter in this northern hemisphere.

Ultimately, the attraction is simply grace, God's attractive love.

And we cannot determine or limit the power of God's grace.

At Easter, the full extent of His love for us is apparent.

His very own Son has fulfilled the divine will.

Jesus suffered, and he died; then he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

There's a beautiful red cardinal chirping away outside my window atop a tall evergreen.

His song is sweet and loud and dominates the air waves.

He had been gone for a while and had only recently reappeared.

The song of the cardinal always moves me to try to imitate it, and I do so on occasion.

What does this have to do with resurrection?

It is life, new life, God's life, a sign of the eternal spring.

Jesus' resurrection is all that and more – much more.

Alleluia! He has risen as he said. Happy Easter to one and all!