

LIFE IN CHRIST

Receiving God's Gifts — Sharing God's Gifts

The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS

+ Easter 2023 +

On the Cover:

Christ and Mary Magdalene, a Finnish Legend

Albert Edelfelt

1890

Life in Christ

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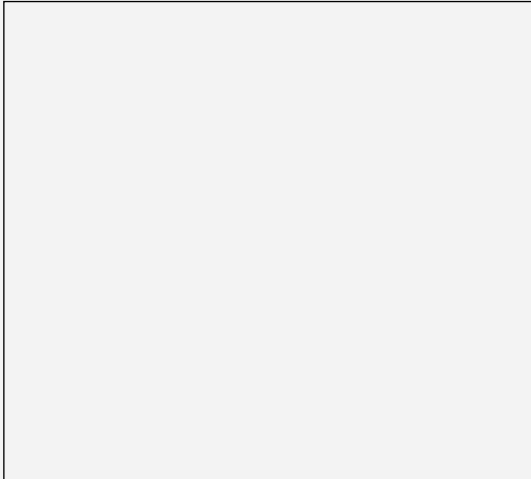
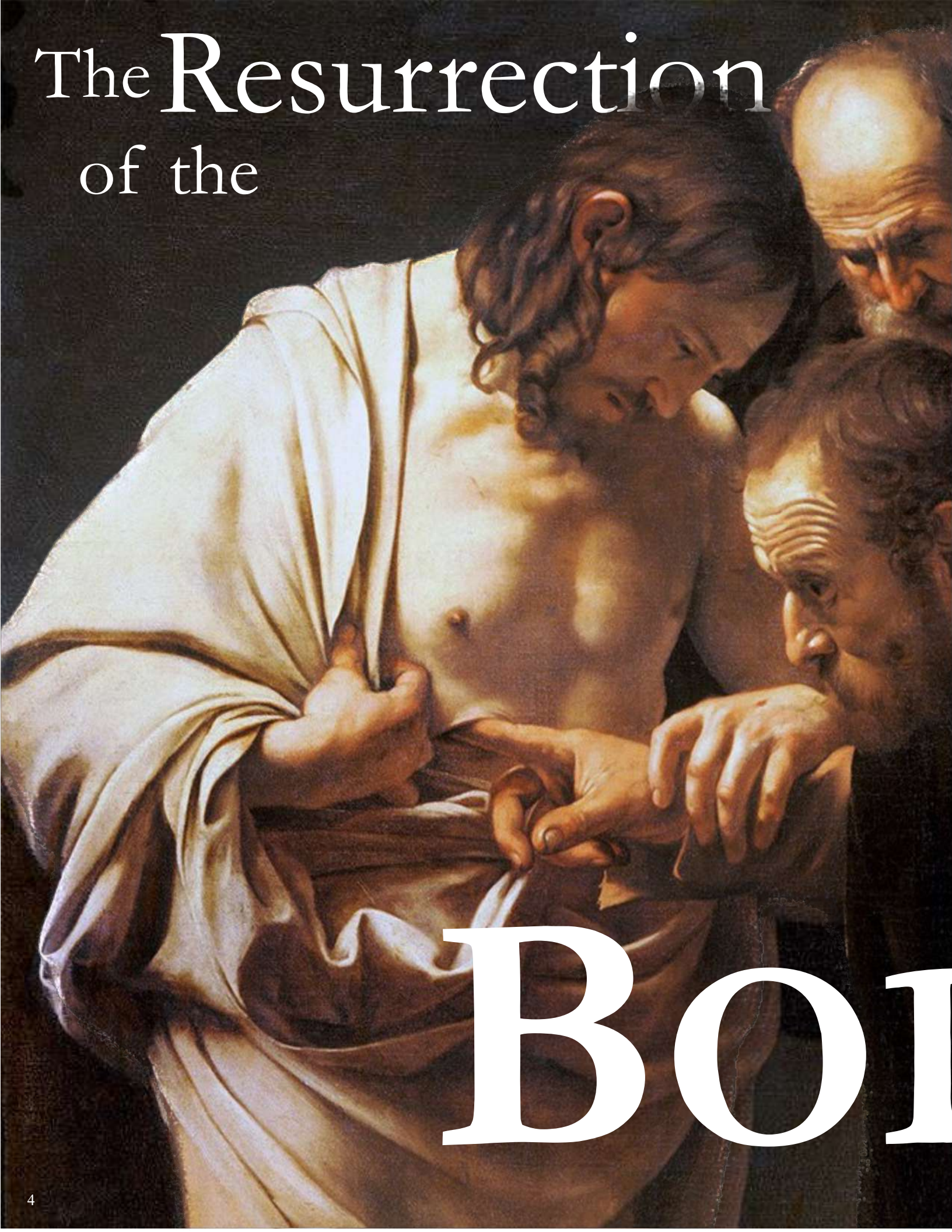


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The Resurrection of the



BOI



BODILY

Pastor Fields

Every Easter season we celebrate the fact that Christ is risen. It is, as they say, the reason for the season. Yet what do we mean by that?

When the women and the disciples came to the tomb of Jesus, they found that His body was not there, but that the linen He was bound in was alone and folded.

To believe in Christ's Resurrection is, above all else, to believe in His bodily resurrection. But why does it matter that His body was raised? Would it not be good enough if His spirit was merely raised?

Many early Church heresies asked this question: why did His body have to be raised?

They asked this question because many early Christians came from a Greek background, and had a Greek way of thinking, which at the time wanted to minimize the importance of the body, and maximize the importance of the soul. They thought the body was merely a vessel, a cage that we are trapped in for the duration of this life, and that when we die, we shed it and live in pure freedom as a spirit.

But this is not and never was the Biblical understanding of the Resurrection.

The Greek philosophical mindset thought of the body as just a needless addition to who we really are, which is our spirit, our mind. The mind was the true self. The body was just a trapping.

But the Bible teaches that God made Adam from the dust, and formed him, and imbued a spirit into him by His breath. Man, therefore is body and soul united as one. If man had no body, he would not be man, even as if he had no soul, he would not be man.

Therefore, if Christ, who is both God and man; if He is truly to be raised by the Father, He must be raised both body and soul, for if He is only raised spiritually, He is, in a sense, only half justified. He is only half man.

So it is necessary that Christ, the new Adam, be raised bodily, so that it is clear that the whole human person, body and soul, is redeemed.

For this reason, we confess in the creed 'I believe in the resurrection of the body.'

We, too, shall be redeemed on the Last Day. We too shall be raised from the dead to live and reign with Christ forever and heaven. And even as He was raised as a whole person, body and soul, we too must be raised bodily, so that each Christian, in our entirety, is redeemed by the blood of Christ, not just spiritually, but as spirits with God given bodies, purified by the flesh and blood of Jesus, sacrificed upon the cross on Good Friday, and given to us to eat and drink every Lord's Day.

This is an often forgotten part of the meaning of Easter. It is not merely that Jesus lives, but that He lives bodily, and that we too shall live bodily with our Lord, for we in our wholeness shall have eternal life. Nothing of us shall remain unredeemed.

What will our raised body be like? This we do not know, but we know that it will be like Christ's heavenly body, for we shall see Him as He is. ■

Meet Our New Member!

Wyatt Coté

COME UNTO ME, ALL YE
THAT LABOR AND ARE HEAVY
LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE
YOU REST. Matthew 11:28





welcome

On Sunday, February 26th, Wyatt Coté was born into God's eternal kingdom through the waters of Holy Baptism! At first coming with a friend last year to see what Lutheranism was all about, he continued to worship with us, and ultimately asked to be catechized in the Faith. Wyatt is the graphic art specialist at Pinelake Church, and he enjoys visual art. By now you have probably met him, but if not, introduce yourself!

We rejoice with him in his new life, and we shall pray for him as he continues to grow in his baptismal Faith. ■

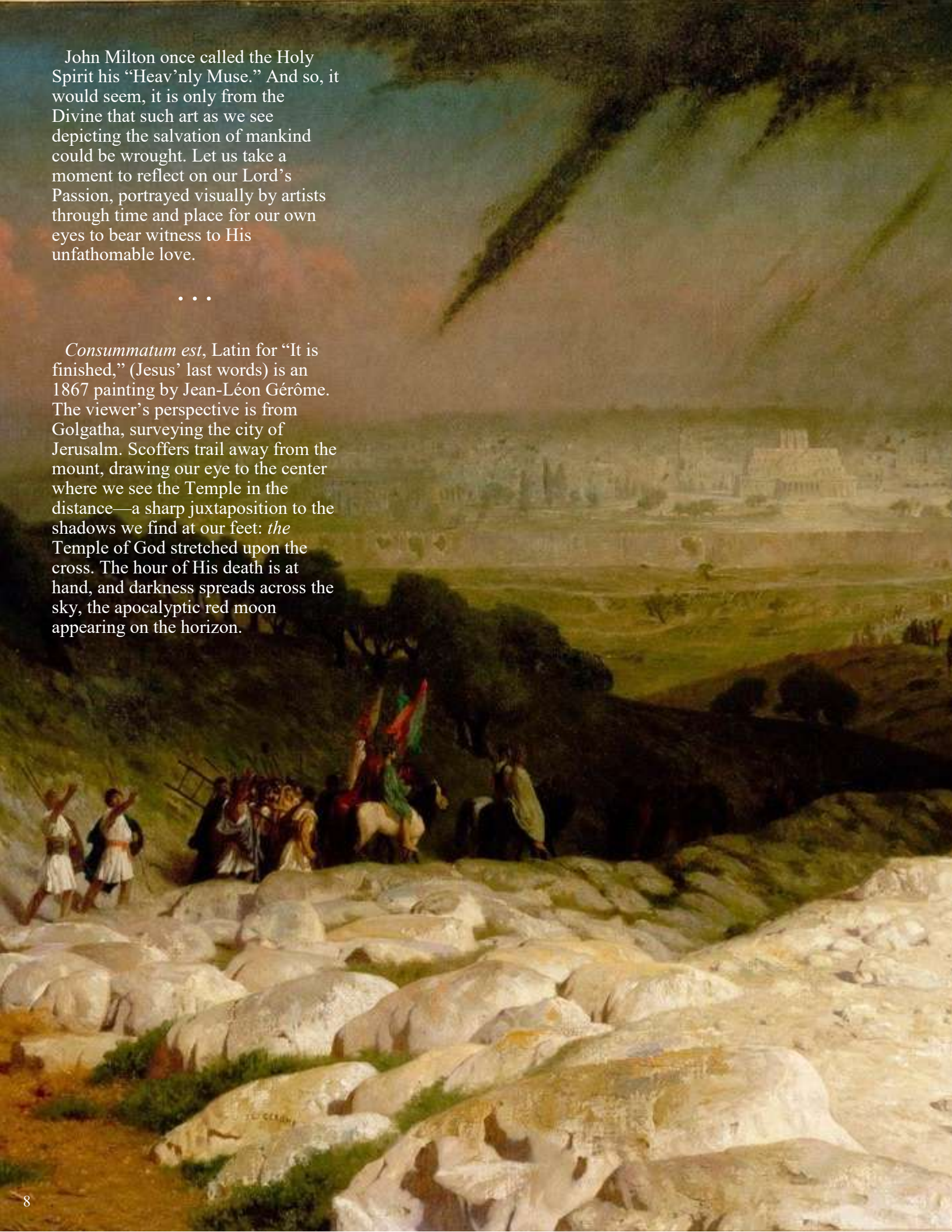
“Having been buried with [Jesus] in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

(Colossians 2:12)

John Milton once called the Holy Spirit his “Heav’nly Muse.” And so, it would seem, it is only from the Divine that such art as we see depicting the salvation of mankind could be wrought. Let us take a moment to reflect on our Lord’s Passion, portrayed visually by artists through time and place for our own eyes to bear witness to His unfathomable love.

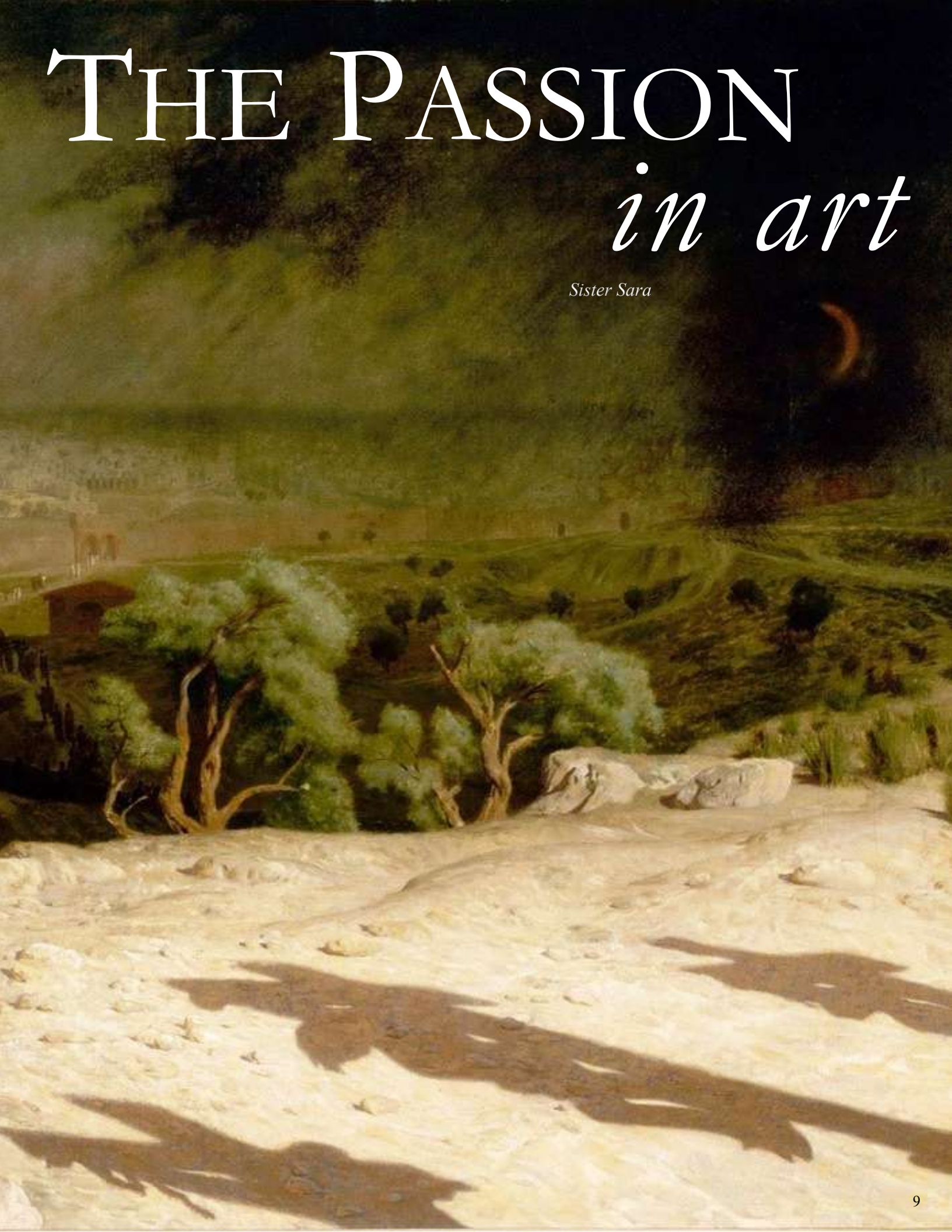
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Consummatum est, Latin for “It is finished,” (Jesus’ last words) is an 1867 painting by Jean-Léon Gérôme. The viewer’s perspective is from Golgatha, surveying the city of Jerusalem. Scoffers trail away from the mount, drawing our eye to the center where we see the Temple in the distance—a sharp juxtaposition to the shadows we find at our feet: *the* Temple of God stretched upon the cross. The hour of His death is at hand, and darkness spreads across the sky, the apocalyptic red moon appearing on the horizon.



THE PASSION *in art*

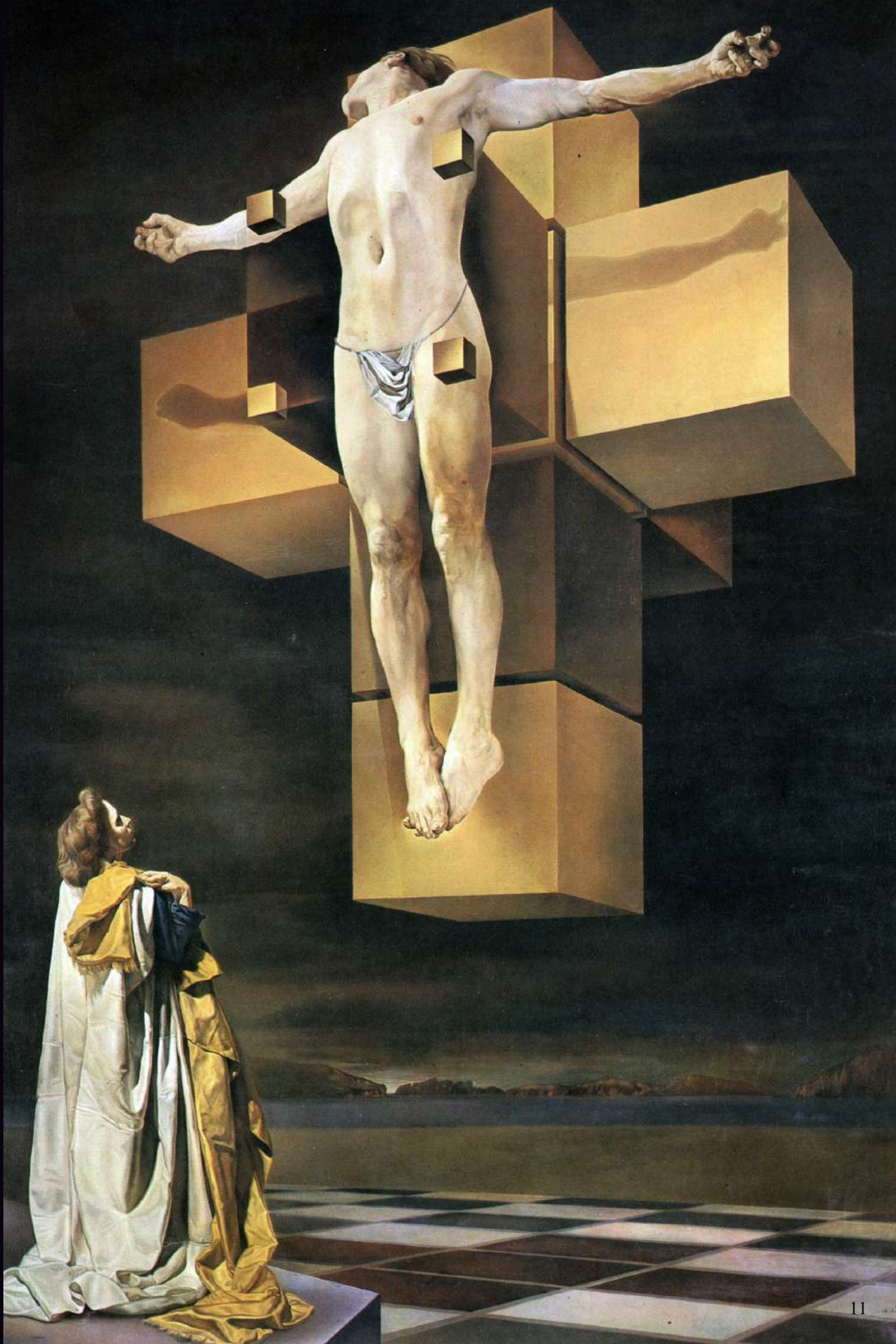
Sister Sara



In *The Flagellation of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, by William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1880), the Savior hangs limply, tethered to a pillar to receive the scourging of sinful men. The paleness of His body bears a stark contrast to the dark shades of everyone else, for He alone is innocent; even in His torture, His eyes look heavenward as He submits to the will of the Father. An unholy trinity weild the tools of torture, two in active flagellation and one stooped in the foreground preparing the next lash; curiously, a fourth man holds a fascia in his hand, but his head is turned from the gruesome sight, as though contemplating repentance. Old men and children alike look upon our Savior, for all of mankind—ancient, present, and future—participate in the crucifixion of God. And you, dear viewer, are no exception: a man deep in the background peers directly at you, for you are in that crowd as well. But take heart, for by His stripes you are healed.



A convert late in life, the latter paintings of Salvador Dali confess his Christian faith. Those acquainted with his work might find this strange, because his pre-conversion art was disturbingly surrealist. *Corpus Hypercubus* (1954) is one of his best-known paintings from his later years, and it employs what he dubbed “nuclear mysticism,” a combination of math, science, and the Faith. The cross is depicted as a tesseract (or “hypercube”), insinuating the transcendental nature of God and the crucifixion. The cruciform shadow lies beneath it on a giant chessboard, with Mary Magdalene bearing witness. She and the Christ contrast with the background, as both are painted in a much more traditional style, highlighting their humanity. The landscape is darkness, with only the glimmer of light lying upon the distant horizon, foreshadowing the resurrection.



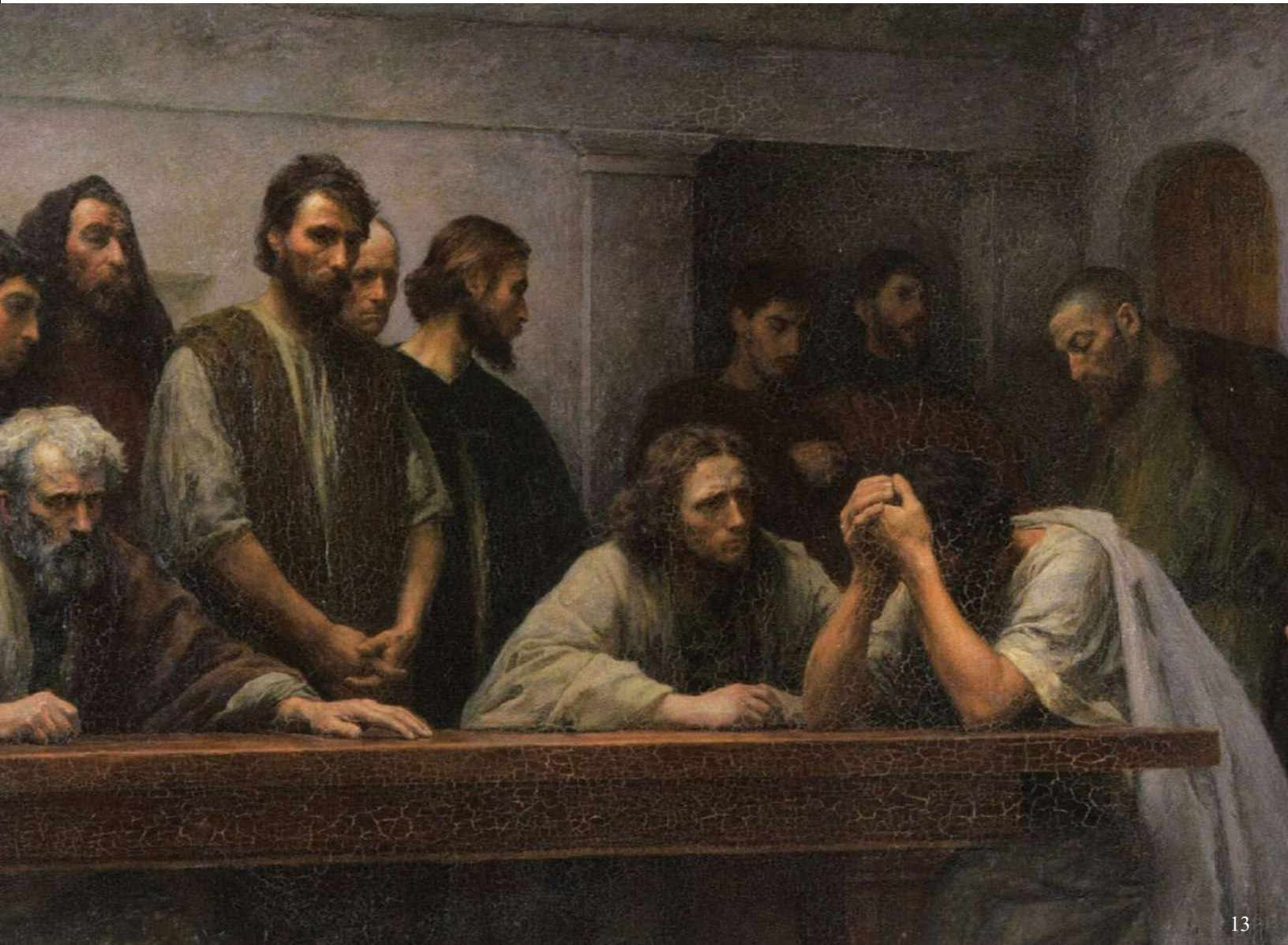
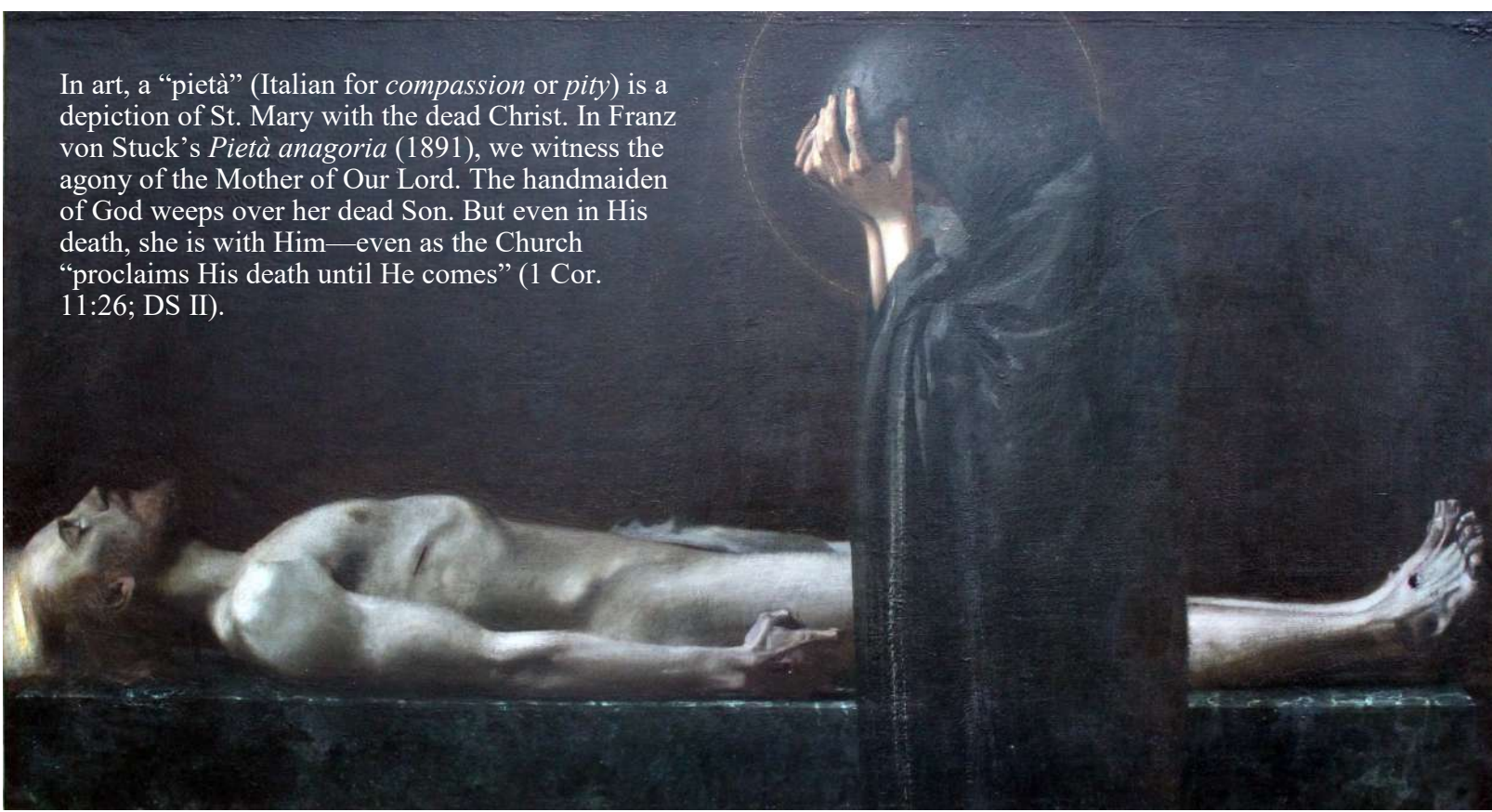


The Veiled Christ is a marble sculpture by Giuseppe Sanmartino (1753). This piece depicts our Lord's rest in the tomb: He lies in peaceful repose, His head upon a pillow as though asleep. His crown—once an instrument of torture but now the sign of triumphant reign—awaits Him at His feet, along with the three nails and the tool to remove them. Both heartrending and beautiful, this piece calls to mind the ancient words: "And on the seventh day, He rested from all His work which He had done" (Genesis 2:2-3).

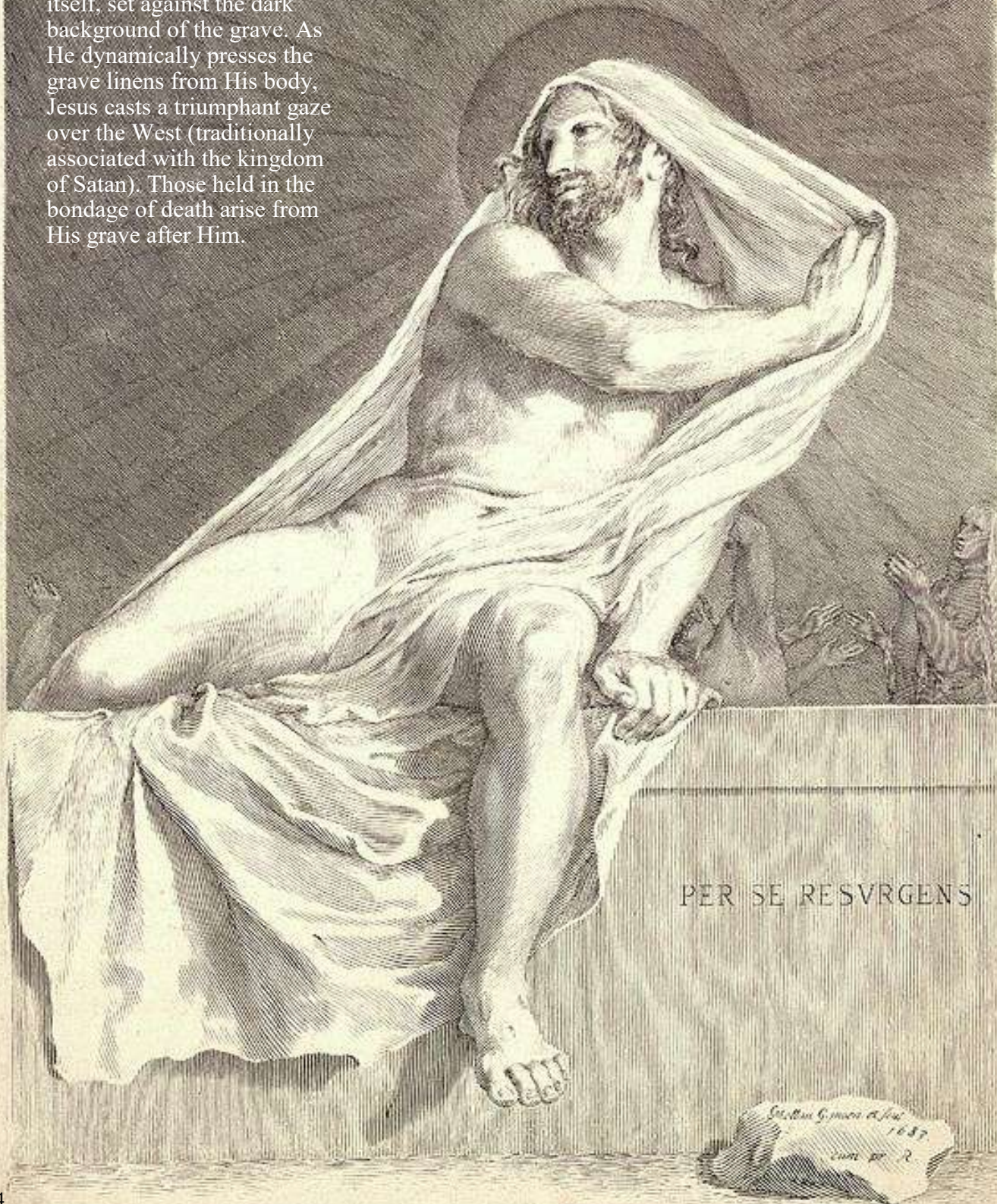
Holy Saturday, a 1907 painting by Eugene Burnand, glimpses what often receives little attention in Holy Week art: the despair of the disciples the day following Jesus' death. St. Peter, the outspoken leader of the disciples, sits at the end of the table with his head buried in his hands; the Lord whom he loves has died, and Peter's last act was to deny Him. St. John, distinct with his young, beardless features, attempts to console Peter, while the rest of the room is shrouded with the palpable weight of loss, bewilderment, and unspoken sorrow.



In art, a “*pietà*” (Italian for *compassion* or *pity*) is a depiction of St. Mary with the dead Christ. In Franz von Stuck’s *Pietà anagoria* (1891), we witness the agony of the Mother of Our Lord. The handmaiden of God weeps over her dead Son. But even in His death, she is with Him—even as the Church “proclaims His death until He comes” (1 Cor. 11:26; DS II).

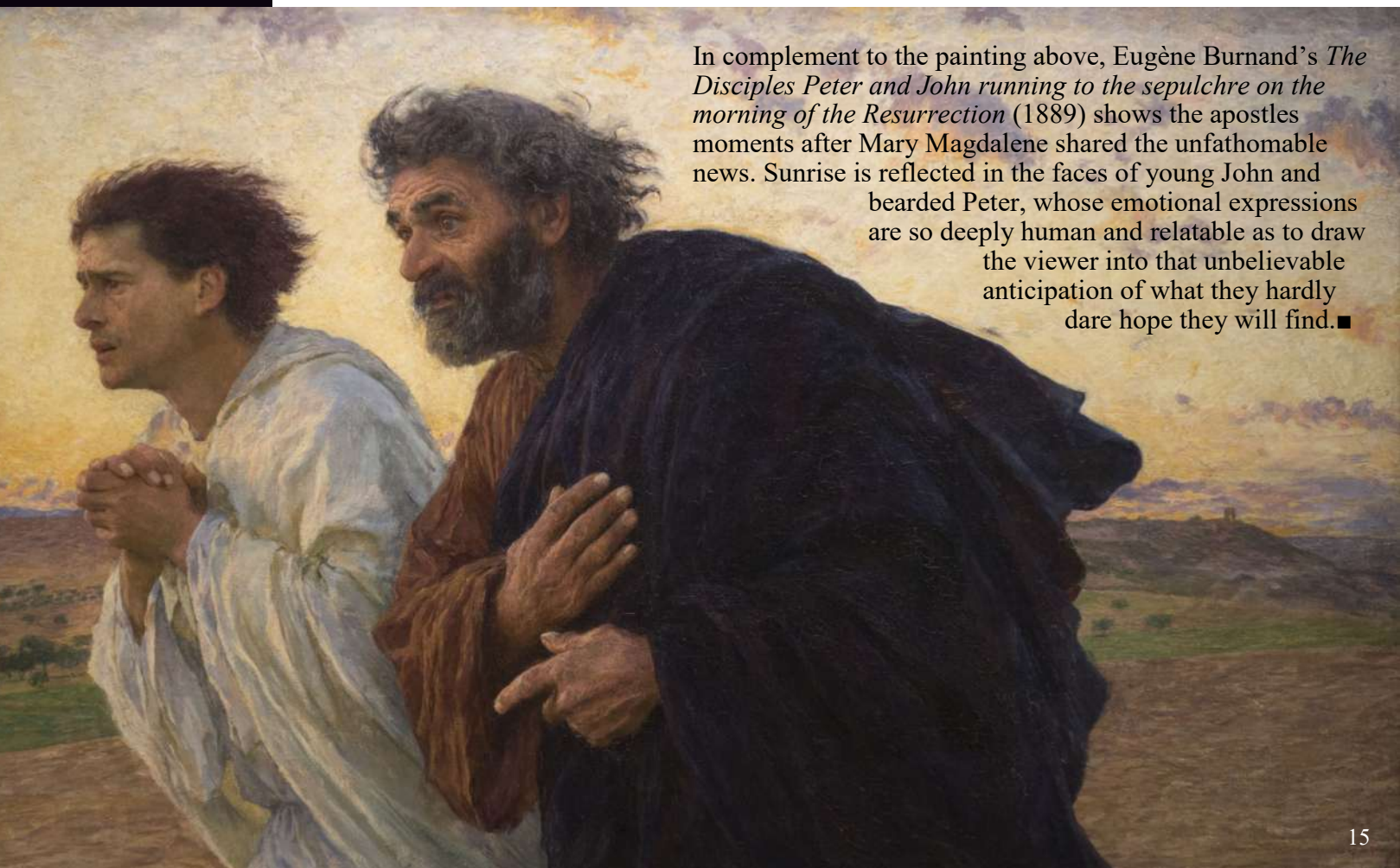


The Resurrection (or *Per Se Resurgens*, "Rising by Himself"), is an engraving by Claude Mellan French (1683). The Latin title alludes to Christ's prophecy of His resurrection in John 10:17-18: "I lay down My life that I may take it up again." His holy form is light itself, set against the dark background of the grave. As He dynamically presses the grave linens from His body, Jesus casts a triumphant gaze over the West (traditionally associated with the kingdom of Satan). Those held in the bondage of death arise from His grave after Him.





In *Heralds of the Resurrection* (1867), the Russian painter Nikolay Ghe gives us a glimpse not of the risen Christ Himself, but of the first moments following His resurrection. As the first rays of light peer over the horizon, Roman soldiers depart Jerusalem's city walls to begin the day's work in good humor, hardly aware of the miracle transpiring. Meanwhile, the quiet mist of dawn is disturbed only by a frantic figure tearing toward the city; she is Mary Magdalene, who has just seen Jesus risen from the dead. "Go to My brothers and tell them," He said. And so she races back from the tomb, for Christ is risen indeed, alleluia!



In complement to the painting above, Eugène Burnand's *The Disciples Peter and John running to the sepulchre on the morning of the Resurrection* (1889) shows the apostles moments after Mary Magdalene shared the unfathomable news. Sunrise is reflected in the faces of young John and bearded Peter, whose emotional expressions are so deeply human and relatable as to draw the viewer into that unbelievable anticipation of what they hardly dare hope they will find. ■



Mark does battle with the weeds while Gloria gives the lawn a much-needed haircut!



What better way to celebrate the Annunciation than by... doing yardwork! On Saturday, March 25th, a band of plucky souls set out to tame the wilderness of the church grounds in preparation for the rapidly approaching Holy Week. Despite the sweat and labor, there remains something quite Edenic in caring for creation. Thank you to all who came for your beautiful work!■

David reigns back the over-enthusiastic curbside creation.



Real supervisors where shades.

Meanwhile, Chuck teaches the unruly grass a lesson...



Bob defends the Western front from infiltrating papal weeds!



Where the wild things are... is not just outside!
Nancy lays waste to the dust bunnies!

Christ Lutheran Quilters





Our quilters have been hard at work! Cutting, stitching, and tying, just about every month (and sometimes twice a month!) they transform the Fellowship Hall into a veritable sewing room. While veteran quilters turn out on these mornings, even clueless quilters like Pastor Fields have been known to help tie knots (which means you can, too!). The pleasant aroma of coffee accompanies the morning's bonding over batting, and often culminates in a lovely lunch together.



Following the terrible tornadoes that struck Mississippi earlier this year, our quilters helped the relief effort by donating their handiwork to those in need. On April 4th, they drove a carload of quilts and various other items to Rolling Fork, where they were received with great gladness. Thank you, ladies! ■



The Decalogue

the path of life

Pastor Fields

It once always annoyed me that people of a non-Christian background would always say the same thing: we do not need religion to tell us what is right and wrong. It's obvious! We can just figure it out from plain common sense. Do we really need a holy book to tell us that it is wrong to steal?

It annoyed me because, in reality, it is not obvious that it is wrong to steal. In fact, throughout most of history, most people thought that in certain circumstances, it was entirely right to steal what was not yours. The Vikings made a living out of stealing gold and silver from churches. The Romans made a living stealing land and slaves. Countless nations made a living stealing tribute from nations and states that they had subjugated. What was wrong with stealing, they would think. To the victor goes the spoils.

The natural morality of this world, that is, the morality of Satan, is that might makes right, and that power justifies everything. Stealing is not wrong if you are stronger than the one you stole from. Killing is not wrong if you are stronger than the murdered. Adultery is not wrong if you have the wealth to afford a consort. This is how the fallen, sinful mind thinks. It thinks the thoughts of our father the Devil.

In the past few years, I have been, in a strange way, relieved by the riots and looting and violence that have plagued this nation. Not because I think that rioting, looting, and harming are good, but because it has forced the country to admit to its fundamental lie: that morality is obvious.

Whenever we hear of riots, we hear countless people say, 'It is okay, because the cause is just!' Whenever we hear of looting, we hear politicians say, 'Of course it is okay for them to steal, they are poor!' Whenever we hear of violence, we are told, 'They commit violence because they are victims of the system, they cannot be blamed.' In saying all these things, they prove the Lord right, and all humanity wrong, that we cannot know what is good or bad apart from the revelation from God, for all evil can be excused with the right reason, and all good belittled with a little cynicism. Morality is obviously not so obvious.

For this reason, millennia ago, God found it necessary to instruct the people of Israel, and all mankind after them, of what was right and what was wrong. Having delivered the Hebrews from Egypt, among the first things the Lord did was give them the fundamental rules of how to live as someone good, how to live as someone godly, which is to say, how to be virtuous, and to avoid the wickedness of the idols.

The Newsletter will be studying the Decalogue, that is, the Ten Commandments, the not-so-obvious way of life that the Lord has desired for His creation, and for His people. A way of order and love and life, to stand against the worldly way of chaos, covetousness, and death.

'Before you stands the way of life, and the way of death. Choose life.' ■

Bright green fronds adorn the entry on Palm Sunday as everyone gathers in the narthex with palms in hand...



Before the service, palms are prepared by the altar guild.

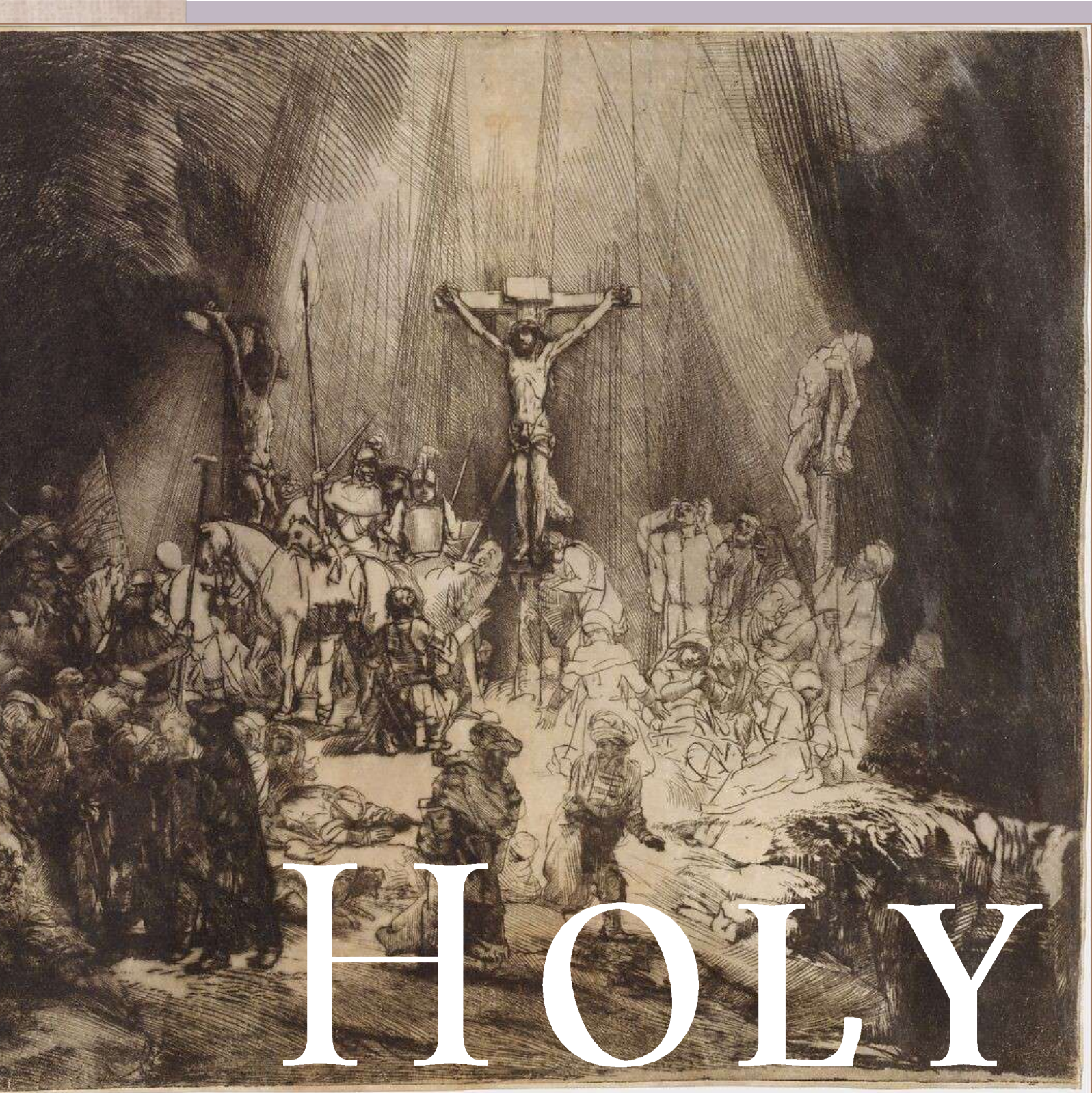


On Maundy Thursday, we begin the Triduum with the invocation... words we will not hear again until Easter morning. Likewise, it is the last time we taste the Lord's Supper until He is risen triumphant over the grave.



Above: The Altar Guild rehearses the Stripping of the Altar, which takes place during the liturgy on Maundy Thursday.

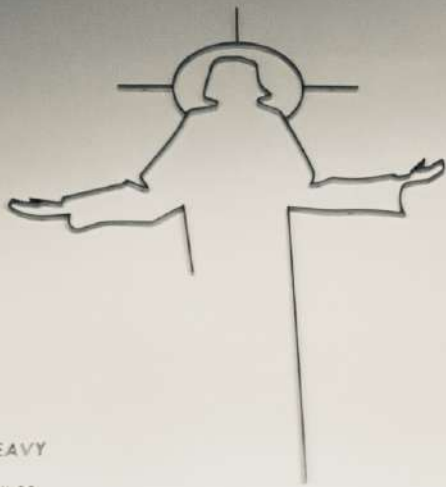




WEEK

at Christ Lutheran

“WHAT HAVE I DONE TO YOU,
O MY PEOPLE?”



COME UNTO ME, ALL YE
WHO ARE LABORED AND ARE HEAVY
LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE
REST. Matthew 11:28



The Church traversed the Triduum during Holy Week: the three days of our Lord's betrayal (Maundy Thursday), death (Good Friday), and descent into Hell (Easter Vigil).

Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle!

We end Holy Saturday with the Easter Vigil... a service which begins outside in the darkness, slowly illumined with the Light of Christ as we process into the House of God.



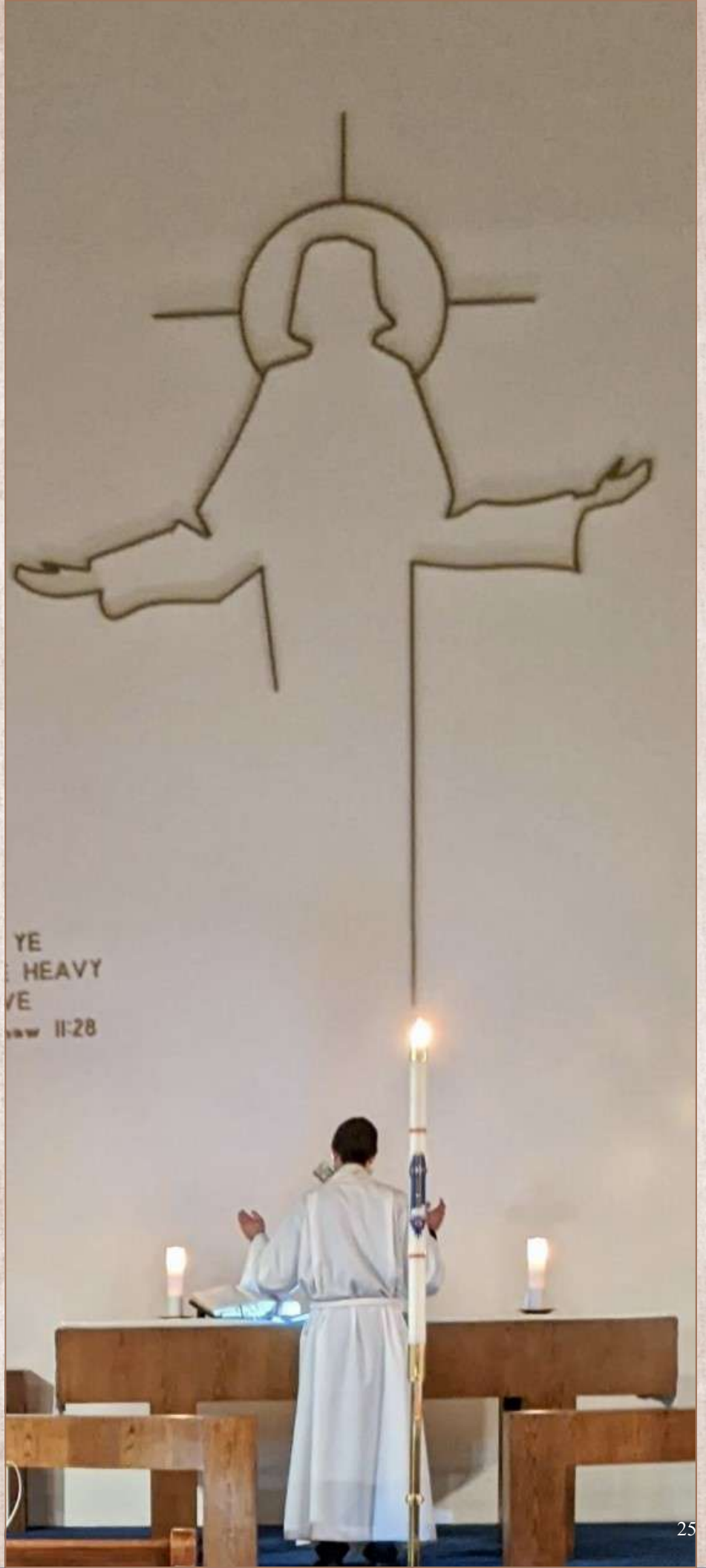
Our men start the bonfire an hour beforehand...



We wait outside before Easter Vigil...



The L



The altar is adorned, the music swells, Pastor reenters clad in white!



This is the week of our Lord's Passion. This week is set apart from all other weeks; these days are the holiest of days. On Palm Sunday, the Messiah is greeted in Jerusalem with palms and shouts of "Hosanna." On Maundy Thursday, the night of the Passover of God, Christ the Lamb gives us His own Flesh to eat and Blood to drink. And, having given Himself for our salvation, He is delivered into the hands of wicked men, betrayed and flogged for claiming to be the Son of God. Our Lord is lifted high upon the cross on Good Friday: a shame before the eyes of men; but to those who see, the cross is His throne and the thorns, His crown. Descending to the heart of Hell on Easter Vigil, Jesus proclaims His triumph over the Kingdom of Death, binds the strong man, and leads the saints out in His victorious train. It is because of all this, our Lord's dear sacrifice and glorious victory, that we and all the redeemed may cry,

"Christ is risen! Alleluia!" ■

During the Service of Baptism, the elder splashes the congregation with water from the font, reminding us of our own baptism.



Our sign-language interpreter, Denece, never fails us. Thank you, Denece!





“Christ is
arisen
from
the
grave’s dark
prison!”

COME UNTO ME, ALL YE
THAT LABOR AND ARE HEAVY
LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE
YOU REST. Matthew 11:28



Christ is risen!
He is risen, indeed!
Alleluia!



Pace
Easter

påske

Puask

Peaske

Oostern

Pasen

Ostern

Paosje

Pâques

Påke

Ostere

Pâques

Ouschteren

Pâques

Oschtere

Ostern

Oüsta

Pôque

Pâkye Pasca

pèsca

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Pascas

Pasqua

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The Many

as



Names of Easter

Pastor Fields

Now that we are in the season of Easter, it is a fun bit of trivia to know why the season is named, well, 'Easter!' And it is fun to know what it is called elsewhere.

Originally, the Feast and Season of Easter was called among the earliest Jewish Christians Pesach, which simply meant 'Passover' since the Resurrection of Our Lord happened during the Passover, and is understood to be Our Lord's passing over from death unto life.

This was carried over into the Greek and Latin languages as Pascha, still meaning 'Passover.' This is the origin of the adjective 'paschal,' which we know from our use of the 'paschal candle.'

Most languages derive their word for 'Easter' from this Greek word. The French call it paques, and the Italians call it pasqua, and the good Romanian calls it paste. The Welsh call it pasg.

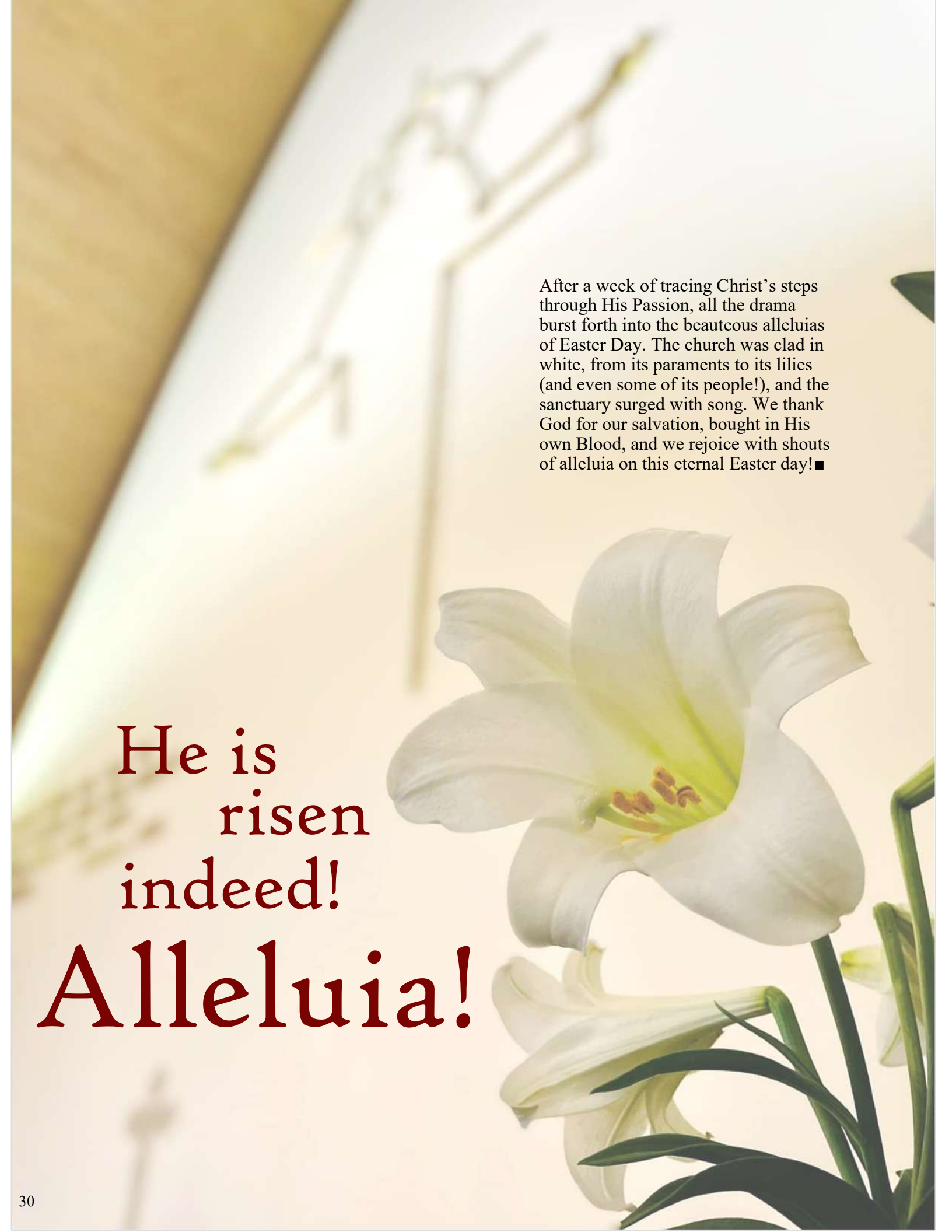
But we English speakers are different. We call it 'Easter.' That is a word that has nothing to do with Passover. Why do we use it?

Some know-it-alls like to say that we call it Easter because it was originally a pagan fertility festival called Eostre back in the old Anglo-Saxon days. This is nonsense. It is called 'Easter' because 'Eostre' was the Ango-Saxon word for 'April,' the month on which Easter most often landed. This should not surprise us since Easter is the culmination of 'Lent,' a word that simple means 'Spring.'

However, there are other languages that have different ways of referring to Easter. In many Slavic languages, they call it some variation of the word veliky, which literally means 'the Great Day,' and in Hungarian it is known as husvet, literally 'taking the meat,' since one could not eat meat during Lent, but had to wait until Easter.

Perhaps most beautiful, in my opinion, is the term used in Finnish, which is paasiainen, which means 'the Liberation,' a reference to both Christ's liberation from the tomb, and our liberation, won by Christ, from the devil.

Every language has a word for Easter, and each tell us something about the holy day, whether it is its origin, when in the year it falls, or its deeper meaning. The world is a many splendored thing. ■



After a week of tracing Christ's steps through His Passion, all the drama burst forth into the beautiful alleluias of Easter Day. The church was clad in white, from its paraments to its lilies (and even some of its people!), and the sanctuary surged with song. We thank God for our salvation, bought in His own Blood, and we rejoice with shouts of alleluia on this eternal Easter day! ■

He is
risen
indeed!
Alleluia!





Feast of the Resurrection

The Feast of the Resurrection was celebrated on April 9th, replete with joyous voices, resounding brass, and glorious descants. But most importantly, we joined in the Marriage Feast of the Lamb, ascending the steps of the chancel to receive the food of immortality upon our lips on this most holy day.

Pale in comparison, but sublimely scrumptious nonetheless, was the “hors d'oeuvres” to the Feast, if you will! We enjoyed a downright heavenly spread of brunchy goodness during the Sunday school hour, with various meats and casseroles, fruits and egg dishes, and of course, a tableful of carb-alicious sweet breads (thank you, cooks and bakers!). While the adults savored and chatted, the kids ate at the speed only kids can in order to get outside and hunt for Easter eggs! The older kids hid the chocolatey treats and the younger ones enjoyed finding them. Thank you to all who organized and participated in the festivity of this holy Easter Day! ■





Hymn of the Month

Sister Sara

April—

Christ Jesus Lay in
Death's Strong Bands

LSB 458

Before speaking of our hymn of the month—a truly great hymn!—we must first turn to the two hymns directly following it: “Christ Is Arisen” (459) and “Christians, to the Paschal Victim” (460). These are actually one hymn, and they are about a millennium old!

Victimae Paschali Laudes (“Praises to the Paschal Victim”) is the Latin title for hymn 460, which was originally written by a famous medieval figure named Wipo of Burgundy. This hymn was what musicians call a *sequence*: a choral chant during the liturgy that came between the Alleluia and the Gospel reading. It decorated the Alleluia we sing as we rise for the Gospel, usually adding details proper to the Gospel story of the day; in so doing, it prepared the listener to hear this Word. This particular sequence was (and still is!) appointed for use on Easter Day and its octave (the eight days following Easter). Appropriately enough—for it summarizes the atoning sacrifice of *the* Passover Lamb that has just taken place (remember, Holy Week was the week of Passover for the Jews); and then, in stanza two, it turns to the drama of Easter morning, entreating Mary Magdalene to tell us what she has witnessed. She responds in haste: “The tomb of Christ, who is living, The glory of Jesus’ resurrection; Bright angels attesting, The shroud and napkin resting. My Lord, my hope, is arisen; To Galilee He goes before you.” The language is disjoint and breathless, not even making grammatical sense. It is as though we have met her on the road as she is rushing back from the tomb, heart racing and thoughts in hopeful disarray. She has witnessed *the* singular and time-rending Miracle, and who could possibly understand! We end the sequence with a confident declaration and petition: “Christ indeed from death is risen, Our new life obtaining. Have mercy, victor King, ever reigning! Amen. Alleluia.”

“Christ Is Arisen” (459) was originally a medieval German *Leise*, or folk hymn. A manuscript from 1190 A.D. describes its use, which is fantastic to imagine... During the Good Friday liturgy, an image of the Crucified One was lowered into a holy grave and covered with a linen cloth while the choir sang “Behold, thus dies the righteous one.” The next day, during the Easter Vigil, the priest and a few helpers would go secretly to the grave and raise the statue or painting of the Crucified One. Finally, the other priests along with all the people would come to Matins early the next morning, at the end of which occurred the *visitatio sepulchri*: the visit to the sepulchre. This was a little drama enacted by three women (playing Mary Magdalene and the two others), as well as two men (playing Peter and John). When the actors playing the apostles pointed to the linen cloths lying in the grave, the choir would sing in Latin, “He has risen as He said,” and the congregation would respond with gusto: “Christ is arisen from the grave’s dark prison!” What an epic ending to a church service—and to the Triduum! Later on, this hymn began to be sung in alternation with the stanzas of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes*, which is how we use it even now in the LSB.

Okay, finally! Enter this month’s hymn: “Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands,” the Hymn of the Day appointed for Easter Day. As our beloved Martin Luther is famous for, this hymn is his adaptation and expansion of hymn 459 (and, by association, 460). Notice that it uses the same melodic contours of 459, but it takes out the guesswork of the chant’s timing by giving the melody a strict rhythm. This was one of the big innovations of

Here we have a most pleasing vision not only of communion but of a blessed struggle and victory and salvation and redemption. Christ is God and man in one person. He has neither sinned nor died, and is not condemned, and he cannot sin, die, or be condemned; his righteousness, life and salvation are unconquerable, eternal and omnipotent. By the wedding ring of faith he shares in the sins, death, and pains of hell which are his bride's... He suffered, died, and descended into hell that he might overcome them all. Now since it was such a one who did all of this, and death and hell could not swallow him up, these were necessarily swallowed up by him in a mighty duel; for his righteousness is greater than the sins of all men, his life stronger than death, his salvation more invincible than hell.

—Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520)

A Note about the Music

To really appreciate this hymn, it's important to know two musical buzzwords: *setting* and *mode*.

Firstly, we call the combination of the melody and the harmony notes of a song its *setting*. Easy, right?

Mode is a little trickier: to put it simply, it refers to the combination of notes used in a particular musical scale. In the Western tradition, we are the most accustomed to hearing major and minor modes (we generally associate major with happy-sounding music, and minor with sad). How simple things have gotten... in times past, there were many modes. Many of Luther's hymns in our hymnal, for example, sound slightly off or weird to us because they are neither major nor minor, but modal (i.e., using one of the other seven modes).

This month's hymn is *set* in the Dorian *mode*. This means that its melody and harmony use the Dorian scale, which is much like our minor scale, but half a bubble off. During the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Dorian mode was thought to convey strength and seriousness, and many believed it produced a virtuous character. Although we associate Easter with joy, and rightly so, this Easter hymn does not use the expected major mode; rather, appropriately, it employs the Dorian mode, for the drama of the conquering of Life over death is indeed a dreadful and awesome story. The setting of this hymn takes no prisoners; it is here to tell the tale of Easter in no uncertain terms: Christ has won, for he has destroyed death! Alleluia!

Reformation-era music, because predictable timing is the congregation's best friend—*especially* when it comes to music! One of Luther's big liturgical projects was to return the song of the church to the people of the church (rather than an exclusive choir), and he did two major things to accomplish that: make the rhythm accessible, and translate the lyrics into the language the common people spoke (at the time, that meant translating a lot of Latin into German). Fortunately, hymn 459 was already in German, so his job in this adaptation was to expand the lyrics so that the singers could meditate on the events the lyrics describe.

Luther begins stanza one with the image of "the grave's dark prison," showing Death's proud stranglehold of our Lord as He is entombed. This, Luther shows, was the Lord's sacrifice on our behalf. But in accord with his fiery personality, Luther gives the spoiler right away: "now at God's right hand He stands And brings us life from heaven" This introduction frames the hymn's unfolding drama with the hope of the resurrection.

Stanza two launches into the depth of our depravity, mincing no words about how desperately beyond salvation we were. Death is personified as our formidable and merciless captor. But then, in stanza three, Christ utterly eviscerates Death, reducing it to an empty and powerless husk.

Stanza four is my personal favorite, as it begins with the muscular phrase, "It was a strange and dreadful strife When life and death contended." The mortal combat of the Almighty and our ancient foe, locked in fierce battle for Mankind! One can imagine the triumph of Life Himself as He storms in glory down to the bowels of Hell (I feel a Hans Zimmer soundtrack swelling in the background...!).

Stanzas five and six portray the Scriptural teaching of the Passover lamb and its culmination in *the* Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (Exodus 12, John 1:29).

Lastly, stanza seven interprets the imagery of the Paschal Lamb in light of the Marriage Feast of the Lamb: the Lord's Supper! "Then let us feast this Easter Day On Christ, the bread of heaven... Christ alone our souls will feed; He is our meat and drink indeed; Faith lives upon no other! Alleluia!" What better way to celebrate the Feast of the Resurrection than with the eternal feast which He has set before us through His atoning sacrifice. Encapsulated in this stanza is the *telos*, or the fulfillment, of the entire Easter story. Through Christ's victory, we now partake of His own Body and Blood, being united to Him forever. Alleluia, indeed! ■

Ladies Night Out



Our ladies had a tasty night out at Scrooge's Restaurant and Pub in April! The only thing better than the food, was, of course, the fellowship!

If you would like to "host" Ladies' Night Out (i.e., pick a restaurant and book a reservation), sign up in the Fellowship Hall! All [ladies] are welcome to join us! ■



Hymn of the Month

Sister Sara

May—

See, the Lord Ascends in Triumph

LSB 494

Admittedly, the “Ascension” section of our LSB is a bit slim (yes, a grand total of five hymns...). But that faithful little remnant are strong hymns, and they represent the day well by combining poetic retelling of the Ascension story with robust and memorable melodies. One hymn, however, stands out above the others for its intense theological substance.

A nineteenth century Anglican cleric by the name of Christopher Wordsworth wrote our May Hymn of the Month, “See the Lord Ascends in Triumph” (LSB 494). In a style almost similar to a Greek ode, Wordsworth weaves typology, prophecy, and doctrine throughout the familiar account of Christ’s ascension. More than recounting a story, he sets this event in the intricate framework of the Old Testament Scriptures which long foreshadowed the coming Messiah. Beginning with a glorious depiction of Jesus’ return to the right hand of the Father, the hymn already makes allusions to Old Testament imagery: “Riding on the clouds, His chariot” immediately calls to mind the great prophet Elijah. No doubt, Wordsworth addresses us in the first stanza as though we are the disciples

watching the miraculous ascent—disciples on whom these Scriptural references would certainly not be lost. In forty days, their despair on Good Friday has been utterly transformed into joy beyond joy, for now they witness the conquering Victor make jubilant return to the heavenly kingdom; and now, all the Old Testament finally makes sense.

Stanza two traces us back through the drama of the Triduum, showing how it *must* have been that this “Lord of battles, God of armies” (*Lord of Sabaoth*, anyone?) should die and rise again in order to conquer our ancient foes: “He has vanquished sin and Satan; He by death has crushed His foes.”

In stanza three, the typology begins in earnest: Jesus is depicted as Jacob and Aaron, lifting His hands in blessing (Genesis 27, Numbers 6), and that mysterious figure Enoch, who we read in Genesis “walked with God” and then was translated into heaven (Genesis 5). The next stanza continues by calling Christ our “heavenly Aaron,” a reference to Moses’ brother who was the first high priest of Israel (Leviticus 16:1-16). Throughout Israel’s history, it was *only* the high

priest who could enter the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year. Only *he* could make intercession for the people of God in the sacred place where the presence of God dwelt with man. And now, here, Jesus has become our true High Priest, who enters “With His blood within the veil” (Hebrews 9:6-15). Joshua, the next figure mentioned, actually shares the same name as Jesus, for *Joshua* and *Jesus* are the same in Hebrew. It was the Old Testament Joshua who led the children of God into the Promised Land (“Canaan”) after their years of wandering; but Jesus, the new and perfect Joshua, has led His people from the land of slavery into the true Promised Land. The great prophet Elijah is next to be compared, famously offering his disciple (Elisha) a double portion of his spirit (2 Kings 2:9). Jesus, the greater Elijah, has given His Spirit not only in His atoning sacrifice, but now poured out upon His Church for all eternity.

Like Jesus on the road to Emmaus, Wordsworth shows us how all the Old Testament is fulfilled in the person of Christ. And that brings us to the last and best stanza. The original stanza 5 was written in the second person, as a prayer from the singer to his Lord:

Thou hast raised our human nature
in the clouds to God’s right hand,
There we sit in heavenly places,
there with Thee in glory stand;
Jesus reigns, adored by Angels;
Man with God is on the Throne;
Mighty Lord, in Thine Ascension
we by faith behold our own.

Whether we use the beautiful prayer in the original, or the third-person revision in our hymnal, this is a remarkable stanza! Often overlooked in the Ascension story is the very heart and meaning of the Ascension: you see, Jesus didn’t ascend to take His rightful place as *God*, as though re-assuming a position He vacated for a while but now is come back to; rather, Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father to take His rightful place as *Man*.

God took on our human nature not simply to share an experience and be relatable, like an estranged dad playing ball with his kids (which, surely, no one would complain if the Almighty did that much alone!); but He came to undo the ancient divorce we tendered in our original sin. We who were meant to be one with Him, even as a husband and wife are one, despised His love and severed our holy union. In that, mankind forsook his own humanity, for the purpose and completion of mankind is *union with God*. We sabotaged our own essence!

Therefore, God became Man.

Jesus took on our flesh not to condescend as some magnanimous divinity, but to draw us back into union with God—to *restore our humanity*! When Jesus, the True Man, ascends to heaven, He is drawing all who are united to Him into the eternal Life of the Trinity.

The Ascension is the completion of the redemption story, for in it, Mankind is made who God always meant us to be: His image and likeness, forever united with Him.

Stanza five portrays this deeply meaningful nexus of theology and anthropology in beautiful simplicity. “He has raised our human nature... Man with God is on the throne. By our mighty Lord’s ascension We by faith behold our own.” Amen and amen!■

Fun Facts

What the heck is
typology?

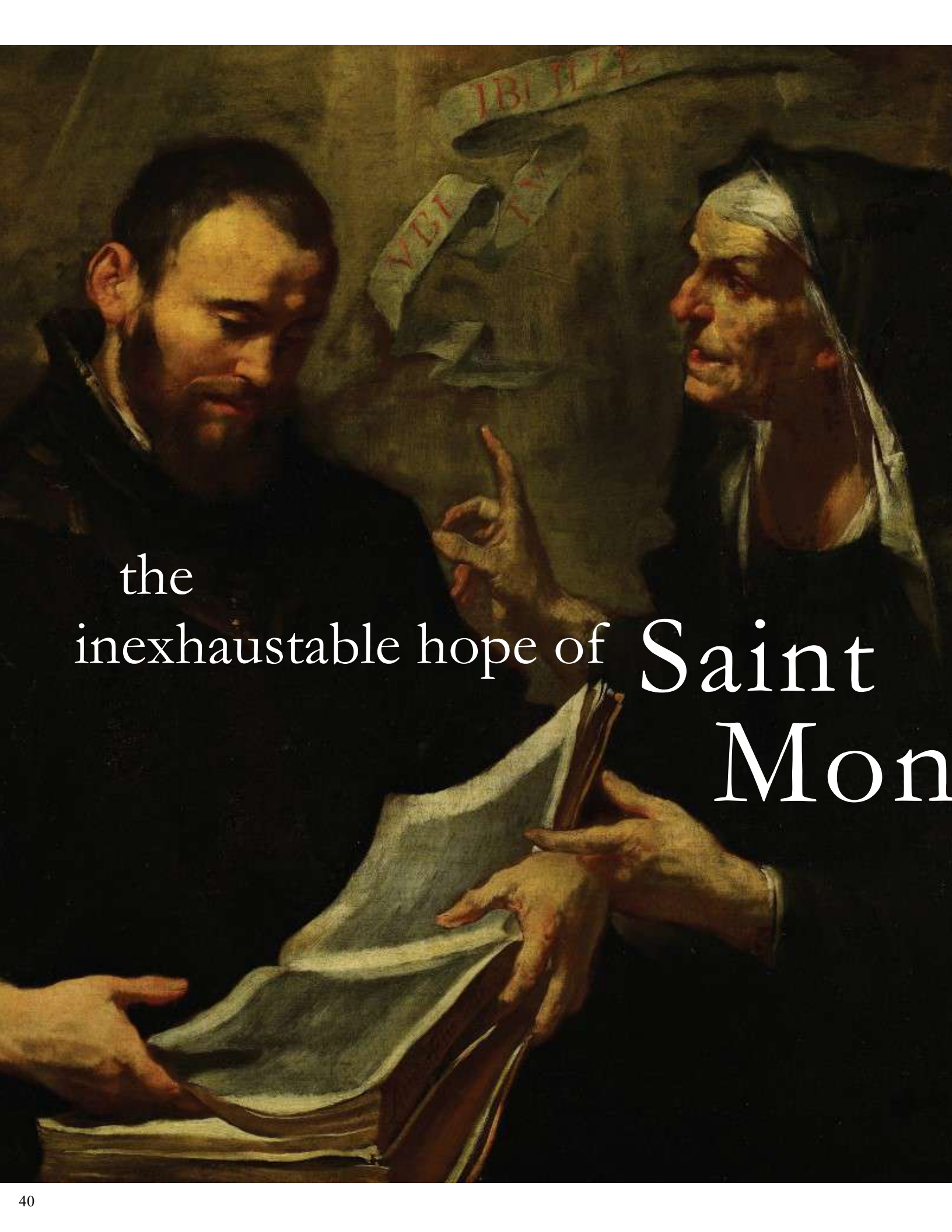
This is a word often used in theology to describe an image or model that foreshadows the true thing

For example, the Great Flood in the days of Noah foreshadowed the waters of Baptism (1 Peter 3:20-21).

Likewise, the Passover Lamb was a type, or image, of Jesus who is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

“God became man that man might become God.”

—St. Athanasius



the
inexhaustible hope of Saint
Mon



Many of us have children who have wandered from the Faith, or know someone in this heartbreaking situation. It is easy to lose hope, to cease our seemingly bootless cries on their behalf. But St. Monica, the faithful mother of a Church Father who changed the *world*, was in just such a place; and like the Persistent Widow, she prayed unceasingly until her once licentious, pagan son became the St. Augustine that we remember today.

St. Monica is remembered in the Church's calendar on May 4th.

The article below was written by Father Steve Grunow of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries (2012).

• • •

St. Monica was likely born in the year 331 AD and died in the year 387 AD. Her husband was a Roman of minor nobility named Patricius, and with Patricius, Monica had three children, one of whom was named Augustine. Augustine would become one of the premiere converts to the Catholic faith, and his works of theology and spirituality are among the greatest of the treasures of the Church.

But the path from Augustine to St. Augustine would not be clear and easy. Augustine spent much of his youth resisting Christ and the Church, and this resistance caused his mother, Monica, much in tears and in turmoil.

Monica petitioned the Lord for years that he might intervene in the life of her son. When this intervention finally did take place, and Augustine came to know Christ and accepted a life as a disciple in the Church, Monica was overjoyed, but would not live long enough to see the full flowering of Augustine's faith.

Petitionary prayer is the most common kind of prayer offered by the faithful, and though common, it is perhaps the most mysterious.

The Lord knows our needs better than we do and nothing that we request of him comes as a surprise. Further, our petitionary prayer, no matter how eloquent or persistent, has no power to force God to act in accord with our desires. We ask God for many things in prayer, but the deepest purpose of our petitions is not to get what we want, but to discern what God wants. Augustine's conversion to Christ happened, but it happened on the Lord's terms, not Monica's.

St. Monica trusted that God in Christ would not abandon her son to a directionless life of faithlessness and dissolution. She trusted that God's purposes for her son's life were greater than what his narrow perceptions could conceive. This act of trust, which is truly a manifestation of the theological virtue of hope, became the crucible through which Monica's sanctity was accomplished.

God's purposes were as much accomplished in Monica's willingness to abide in hope that God ultimately loved her son, even though he resisted that love as his purposes were accomplished in Augustine's conversion to Christ.

It was not Augustine's conversion that made Monica a saint, but her willingness to surrender her will to Christ's, and in this surrender, to abide in hope that Christ's purposes for Augustine would one day be fulfilled. Monica lived to see that day, but even if she had not, her sanctification would have been accomplished.

Hope is one of the least remembered and least understood of the great theological virtues. This is sad in so many ways, as it is often because people are bereft of hope that they refuse to believe and refuse to love.

Hope is not merely optimism but an act of trust that God, who did not abandon Christ to the powers of sin and death and the devil, will also not abandon us. Hope dares to believe that God's purposes will be fulfilled even if we cannot foresee how this will be possible or when such fulfillment will take place.

On this day that the Church remembers the witness of St. Monica, let us renew ourselves in the hope that is instilled in us by the promises of Christ the Lord. ■



Issues, Etc.

The 2023 Issues, Etc.
“Making the Case” Conference

Friday, June 16 & Saturday, June 17, 2023
at Concordia University Chicago



Mollie Hemingway



Mark Hemingway



Kyle Mann



Salvatore Cordileone



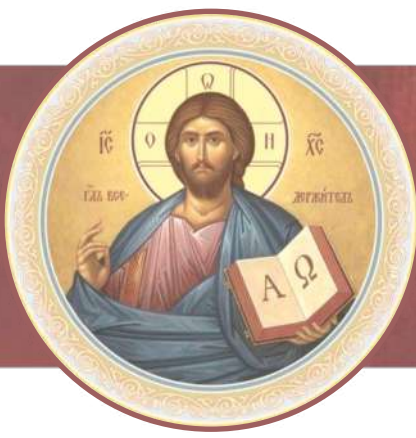
Matthew Harrison



Peter Bender

**Registration
Now Open!**

For more information, visit IssuesEtc.org/2023-conference/



THIS MONTH

At Christ Lutheran

Ladies Night Out

— May 31 —

Stay tuned for details!



~ Altar Flowers ~

Sign up on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board to provide altar flowers in 2023. They are \$45, and you may take them home after the worship service.

Thank you for beautifying the Lord's house!



Men's Whiskey

— Sip & Swill —

Yenish Home
Saturday, April 22
12-5 p.m.

Bring a smoked meat to add to the smorgasbord!



Artwork in This Issue:

Cover: *Christ and Mary Magdalene, a Finnish Legend*, Albert Edelfelt, 1890.

Page 8-15: (Artwork details listed on each page).

Page 20: *Moses Showing the Ten Commandments*, Gustave Dore, 1865.

Page 23: *Christ Crucified between the Two Thieves: The Three Crosses*, Rembrandt van Rijn, 1653.

Page 34, 38: *Design for an organ*, Johann Georg Dirr, 18th century.

Page 40: *Saint Augustine and Saint Monica*, Gioacchino Assereto, 17th cent.



Spring
cleaning



at Christ Lutheran

adopt a room | clean at your convenience



PALM SUNDAY

+ April 2 +
10:30 a.m.

Calling All Quilters!
(And Non-Quilters, too!)

We will be quilting on
Wednesday, April 26
Saturday, May 20
at 9:00 a.m.

Come for a relaxed morning
of fellowship.



Saints' Days in April

- 4 St. Ambrose, Bishop and Confessor
- 6 Sts. Lucas Cranach & Albrecht Durer, Artists
- 10 St. Daniel the Prophet
- 16 St. Aaron, Brother of Moses, High Priest
- 17 St. Philipp Melanchthon, Confessor
- 20 St. Johannes Bugenhagen, Pastor
- 21 St. Anselm of Canterbury, Archbishop, Confessor
- 23 St. George, Martyr
- 24 St. Johann Walter, Kantor
- 25 St. Mark the Evangelist



Saints' Days in May

- 1 Sts. Philip & James, Apostles
- 2 St. Athanasius, Bishop & Confessor
- 4 St. Monica, Mother of Augustine
- 4 St. Friedrich Wyneken, Pastor & Missionary
- 5 St. Frederick the Wise, Christian Ruler
- 7 St. C.F.W. Walther, Theologian
- 9 St. Gregory Nazianzus, Bishop & Confessor
- 9 St. Job, Confessor
- 11 Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Missionaries to the Slavs
- 21 Emperor Constantine, Christian Ruler
- 21 St. Helena, Mother of Constantine
- 24 St. Esther, Queen
- 25 St. Bede the Venerable, Confessor & Theologian
- 31 The Visitation



GOOD FRIDAY

+ April 7 +
7:00 p.m.



THE FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

+ April 9 +
10:30 a.m.

Issues, Etc.



Christ-Centered Cross-Focused Talk Radio
www.issuesetc.org



FEAST OF ASCENSION

+ May 18 +
7:00 p.m.

JOIN US FOR
BIBLE STUDY

bible & breaky | fridays @ 6:30 a.m.



HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday | Maundy Thursday | Good Friday | Holy Saturday | Easter Sunday
10:30 a.m. 7 p.m. 7 p.m. 8 p.m. 10:30 a.m.



Life Walk

2023

SATURDAY, MAY 6TH

Trustmark Park

Registration begins at 8 am | Walk begins at 9 am

Must be a registered fundraising walker to attend.

Register as a walker or create a team.

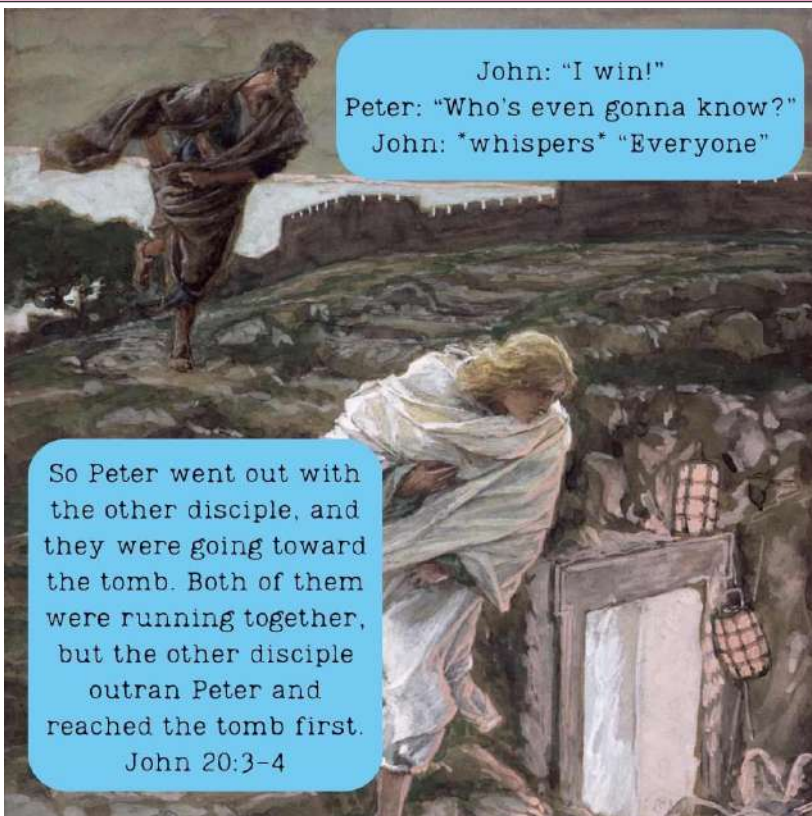
www.cpcmetrofriends.org/lifewalk



FEAST OF PENTECOST

+ May 28 +

10:30 a.m.



John: "I win!"
Peter: "Who's even gonna know?"
John: *whispers* "Everyone"

So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.
John 20:3-4



HOLY TRINITY

+ June 4 +

10:30 a.m.

VOTERS' MEETING May 21

The regular bi-annual Congregation Voter's Assembly will convene immediately following the worship service **Sunday, May 21st, 2023** to approve the slate of council officers. All members are encouraged to attend.

κοινωνία
ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ



Various & Asundry
— Topics for Today —

May 21
5:00 p.m.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL

Crawfish

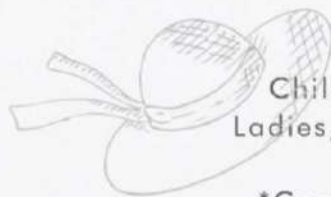
DERBY DAY BOIL



SATURDAY MAY 6TH 3:30 - 6:00

503 Parkway Road
Brandon, MS 39047


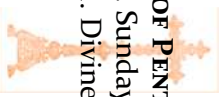
Bring your favorite side or dessert
Crawfish & Cane's chicken will be provided
(Free will offering)



Children's Derby Race & activities
Ladies, wear your favorite Derby Hat!!

*Contact Sabrina for any questions

May 2023

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
PRAYER FAMILIES and BIRTHDAYS Daryl & Sherri Smith 1—Sister Sara		1 <i>Ss. Philip & James</i>	2 <i>St. Athanasius</i> 6:15 p.m. Elders Mtg.	3	4 <i>St. Monica</i> <i>St. Friedrich</i> <i>Wyneken</i>	5 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	6 8:00 a.m. CPC Life Walk 3:30 p.m. Derby Boil
	Bobby & Eloise Springer 9—Nancy Teal	7 EASTER V 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service <i>St. C.F.W. Walther</i>	8	9 <i>St. Gregory Nazianzus</i> <i>St. Job</i> 6:15 p.m. Council Mtg.	10	11 <i>Ss. Cyril & Methodius</i>	12 6:30 a.m. Bible Study
Nancy Tatum 16—Andy Evers 16—Mimi Bradley 17—Elysia Fields 17—James Hansford 18—Ben Rudenske	14 EASTER VI 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service	15	16	17	18 FEAST OF ASCENSION 7:00 p.m. Divine Service 	19 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	20 9:00 a.m. Quilting
Nancy Teal	21 EASTER VII 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service 11:30 a.m. Voters Meeting 5:00 p.m. Koinonia <i>Emperor Constantine</i> <i>St. Helena</i>	22	23	24 <i>St. Esther</i>	25 <i>St. Bede the Venerable</i>	26 6:30 a.m. Bible Study	27
Yenish Family 28—Carolyn Yenish 30—Alaena Ramsey	28 FEAST OF PENTECOST 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Divine Service 	29	30	31 <i>The Visitation</i> 6:00 p.m. Ladies' Night Out	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> Serving this month: Elder—Keith Martin Greeters—Rush & Allison Agent Ushers—Bruce Bodkin, Mark Ochs </div>		