

Living the Mystery

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I have chosen to entitle this column, “Living the Mystery.” It is the Paschal Mystery—the Mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ. The Church participates in and experiences this mystery in and through the sacraments.

It is my hope that the reflections found here from month to month will assist you in living the mystery, for that is the task given to the bishop to the Office of Worship. The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church from Vatican II (*Christus Dominus*), charges bishops: “*They should therefore see to it that the faithful know and live the paschal mystery more deeply through the Eucharist and thus become a firmly-knit body in the unity of the charity of Christ.*”

Pope John Paul II wrote brilliantly of our participation in the weekly celebration of the paschal mystery in his Apostolic Letter, Guide to Keeping the Lord’s Day Holy (*Dies Domini*.) He reminds us that Sunday has always been called “the Lord’s Day,” because it is the day on which the Lord rose from the dead. Every Sunday is the day of resurrection, and ever since the Acts of Apostles the early Christians gathered on the Lord’s Day for the “breaking of bread” (Acts 2:42).

The late Pope reminds us, “*it is not enough that the disciples of Christ pray individually and commemorate the death and Resurrection of Christ inwardly, in the secrecy of their hearts. Those who have received the grace of baptism are not saved as individuals alone, but as members of the Mystical Body, having become part of the People of God. At Sunday Mass, Christians relive with particular intensity the experience of the Apostles on the evening of Easter when the Risen Lord appeared to them as they were gathered together (cf. Jn 20:19)*”

“*Since the beginning of Lent we have been preparing by works of charity and self-sacrifice to celebrate the Lord’s paschal mystery,*” says the introduction to the Passion-Palm Sunday liturgy. Not only during Lent, but every day we try to live in this mystery.