



The Resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ

By Marge Loenser

Some Thoughts for April, I can't think of a better way to start a month than by the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was April 4. The earliest the church celebrates Easter is March 22. The latest is April 25, which happens also to be the feast of St. Mark, which this year falls on a Sunday – so no feast day. Sorry, St. Mark, we'll catch you in 2022, on Monday, April 25!

I love the name "April." It conjures thoughts of soft rain, early blooms, warmer weather – spring; lilacs and forsythia appear, tulips, daffodils and all sorts of blooms join in the symphony of color and joy!

Since there are only a few saints to celebrate this month, I would like to share with you one of my pilgrimages. This one was to Betania, Venezuela. Fr. John Campoli and his pilgrimage leader, Mary Buckman, headed the trip. I believe it was in August, 1994. We wanted to be there on the 15th, the feast of the Assumption. The visionary that Our Blessed Mother appeared to was Maria Esperanza. Many other local people have seen the apparitions as well. Mary Buckman told us there is a profusion of blue butterflies before our Lady appears. I was psyched! The apparitions were at the end of a large field which was part of Maria's farm. We had hours to kill and I had been wandering around when suddenly I tripped and fell injuring my leg.

My traveling “buddy” Annie, ran to get a priest. It was Fr. Butler who was traveling with us. He prayed over my leg and I immediately got up! The Lord healed me through Fr. Butler. Thank you, Lord.

The apparitions were seen in early evening, but we were there in the afternoon, expecting a very large crowd. Finally, it was almost nightfall and a large crowd had assembled. All of a sudden, the crowd was swaying and pushing and everyone was oohing and pointing up. I didn’t see anything, but it was apparent these natives did. The crowd pushed and swayed and pointed, and I had to grab on to a tree for safety. Later on I asked Fr. John if he saw anything. He said he caught sight of the apparition of Our blessed Mother. Apparently, the moon had been dancing as well. (I missed that too.) Even though I didn’t see what he and all the natives saw, I felt part of this miracle. It was quite a day.

The next day we took a side trip to visit the site of a Eucharistic miracle. It was in a convent in Los Teques. (This site and the Betania site were authorized by the Bishop of the Diocese.) It was explained to us that at the Consecration of Mass in 1981, a priest broke the consecrated host in four pieces and laid them on the paten. He looked down and saw blood spurting from the host! He quietly placed the bleeding host in a chalice and placed it in the tabernacle. The priest told the bishop what happened and the bishop told him to place the bleeding host into a monstrance for adoration. The host continued to bleed down the stem of the monstrance. When our group got there to worship it had already stopped bleeding, but the Precious Blood remained on the host. We spent time in adoration at the chapel. What a gift!

I have a lot of other pilgrimage stories to share, but that will be another time. Let us focus on the most miraculous event of all times! The Resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. When Peter and John ran to the empty tomb and looked in, John saw the folded head cloth of Jesus set aside and “believed.” Know why? When people sat at dinner, they used cloth napkins and when they finished eating, they tossed the rumpled napkin on the table. Jesus, folded His and John knew this to mean, He would return. Happy Easter and may God bless each of us.

Love,
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