

"...on the third day he rose again..."

www.graceinaction.org
April 2009

celebrate
April

GRACE IN ACTION



- 5 Palm Sunday
- 9 Holy Thursday
- 10 Good Friday
fast and abstinence
- 11 Holy Saturday
- 12 Easter

LIVING CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP™

modern disciple Carving a holy niche



As the old saw says, Juan Sandoval has the patience of a saint. Thousands of his intricate, hand-carved wood *santos* testify to Sandoval's faith, as well as his time and talent.

Sandoval, 75, began carving in the mid-1980s. As a member of *Los Hermanos*, he meditated regularly on the passion of Jesus Christ. The meditation led to inspiration, and Sandoval began creating three-dimensional illustrations of the Passion.

"I want to wholeheartedly appreciate the price He paid for you and for me, for our salvation," Sandoval said. "I meditate daily, perhaps all day long. I've gone deeply into the last 24 hours of His life."

Sandoval uses his carvings to catechize people, traveling with his wooden sculptures and speaking throughout his native state of New Mexico. The carvings, he said, help people grasp the Passion. "In English, you would call them visual aids," he said.

In Albuquerque, Santuario San Martin de Porres Parish showcases an extensive collection of Sandoval's carvings. He created altar pieces, Stations of the Cross and other installments illustrating Scripture, including the Final Judgment.

"There's 12 years of my life at San Martin," Sandoval said. "I don't have patience to change the spark plugs in my car, but I can get a piece of wood and sit with it all day long," he said. He estimated that he'd invested about 2,000 hours in one complex carving.

"We're all stewards in this life," he said. "Everything depends on what you do with your part. This is a very special gift, of course – the gift of not only carving – but you have to study what you're going to carve for many hours before you even get started. So I study the Bible and other theologians; and I put into wood what I will speak about later. This is my stewardship."



Photo courtesy William B. Keleher



James Baca photo

faith fact Easter eggs, Easter joy

The custom of Easter eggs developed among the nations of Northern Europe. Their history stems from the fertility lore of the Indo-European races. Seeing a living creature emerge from a seemingly dead object startled our pre-Christian ancestors, so the egg became a mysterious symbol of spring and fertility. Converts to Christianity gave eggs a religious interpretation, seeing them as symbols of the rock tomb out of which Christ emerged to new life. Additionally, since eggs were forbidden during the fast of Lent, they became associated with Easter joy, and the faithful painted them in festive colors. Eggs were blessed and eaten, or presented as gifts to friends. The custom of hiding the eggs is universal.

Log on to www.graceinaction.org for an Easter egg blessing.





kidscorner

Good stewardship eggs

Kids and kids-at-heart enjoy colorful Easter eggs. For many centuries, Christians decorated Easter eggs with plant-based dyes from nature. Rather than purchase kits with artificial, petrochemical dye, create natural colors with simple ingredients from the kitchen: fruits, vegetables, spices, coffee and wine. Log on to www.graceinaction.org to find directions for this fun, eco-friendly Easter activity that reveals the wonders of God's creation.

Illustration by Quincy Benton

sowingseeds

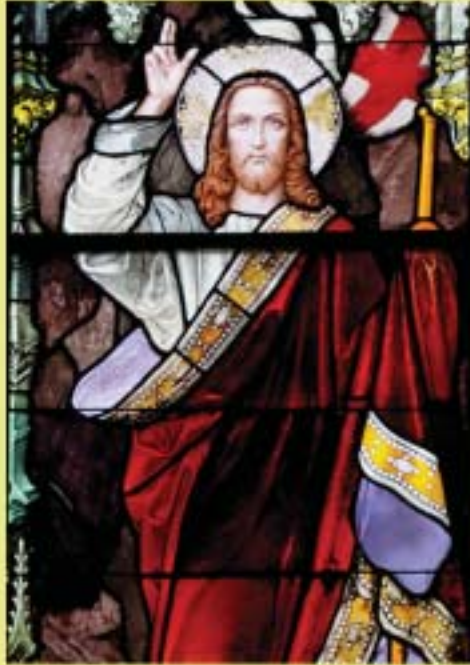
ABCs for Eastertide

"The stewardship pastoral letter strongly reflects the core of the Easter message of the earliest Christian community: 'We have seen the Lord!' (Jn 20:25). Stewardship always starts with the personal experience of the Risen Christ in our midst and in our hearts."

— Stewardship: A Disciple's Response
U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on stewardship

Stewardship starts with the Easter experience. To facilitate your personal experience of the Risen Christ in your midst and in your heart, consider these ABCs for Eastertide:

Always Be Considerate, Discerning Evil From Good, Honoring Ideals, Justifying Kindness, Loving Mercy, Nobly Obeying Providence, Quietly Responding, Shunning Temptation, Uniting Virtue With X-traordinary Youthful Zeal.



James Baca photo

trythis

Roll up your sleeves; lend a hand

If you're short on cash for almsgiving this Lent, consider giving time, instead. Volunteering can result in making others feel good and simultaneously making yourself feel not only good, but also well. Volunteers tend to live longer, according to a *Self* magazine study. The study also indicates that volunteering even 40 hours per year results in people reporting less stress, reduced pain, fewer sick days and more self-worth. Do-gooders feel well because of an increase in spirit-lifting endorphins, along with diminished isolation and loneliness,

according to Allan Luks, author of "The Healing Power of Doing Good" (iUniverse).

TRY THIS: Your parish offers many volunteer opportunities. Consider what you enjoy. If you like to teach, volunteer as a catechist. If you enjoy solitude, sign on to stuff envelopes or help with other office tasks. If you're an extrovert, sign up as an usher or as a person to visit sick or shut-in parishioners. Find a fit. And if your talents and interests lie in an area not yet covered, connect with your parish to see if you might help establish a new ministry or service.

the waywe pray Eastertide stations



The *Via Lucis* (Stations of Light) picks up where the traditional Stations of the Cross leave off, with 14 stations reflecting on Christ's Resurrection to Pentecost. These stations emphasize Easter spirituality.

1. Jesus rises from the dead.
2. The disciples find the empty tomb.
3. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene.
4. Jesus walks with the disciples to Emmaus.
5. Jesus reveals himself in the breaking of bread.
6. Jesus appears to the disciples.
7. Jesus confers on His disciples the power to forgive sins.
8. Jesus confirms Thomas in faith.
9. Jesus appears to His disciples on the shore of Lake Galilee.
10. Jesus confers primacy on Peter.
11. Jesus entrusts His disciples with a universal mission.
12. Jesus ascends into heaven.
13. Mary and the disciples await the Holy Spirit.
14. Jesus sends the Spirit promised by the Father to His disciples. †

Happy Earth Day: April 19

"Question the beauty of the earth, question the beauty of the sea, question the beauty of the air distending and diffusing itself, question the beauty of the sky...

question all these realities. All respond: 'See, we are beautiful!'"

— St. Augustine

"Growing Up," by Ken Papaleo
www.highcountrycoloring.com

