

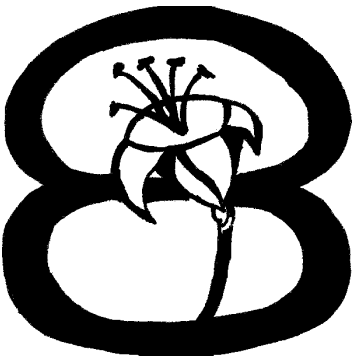
## Easter Octave

Paul Turner

Easter Day is eight days long. Easter reigns as the most important feast in the liturgical year. One single day cannot contain it. One entire week cannot contain it. We celebrate Easter for a week and a day. The period is called the Octave of Easter.

At the weekday Masses each day is treated as though it were a Sunday. We include the Glory to God in the opening rites. The Easter sequence may follow the responsorial psalm. Each Gospel tells one story of how the risen Jesus appeared to his disciples. We recite the Creed. Whenever the priest chooses the first Easter preface or Eucharistic Prayer I, he includes words and phrases that call the weekday "Easter day." The dismissal dialogue at the end of the Mass concludes with two alleluias. The liturgy treats each weekday of the octave as if it were Easter Sunday all over again.

In the early days of the church, those who were baptized at Easter participated at the cathedral Eucharist every day for a week. Their joy was so full that they kept coming back for more. During this period the bishop offered them daily catechesis on the sacraments of the church during his homily at the Masses of the Easter Octave.



The Rite of Christian

Initiation of Adults does not explicitly encourage the newly baptized to participate in the Eucharist during the Easter Octave, but the prayers at Mass still presume that they are there. The Mass prayers assigned to the priest this week make frequent references to these neophytes. The Easter Octave is a sign of the Church's joy. Christ is risen, and we repeat the good news again and again—eight days a week.

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*Doubt no longer, but believe*

## Missing Out

How often we feel, like Thomas, that we have "missed out" on something that helps others to be more secure in their faith; that if we only had the right proof we would come to a full, complete, and total belief. This is seldom the way in which growth in faith works. Most often, for us as it was for Thomas, it is only by doggedly staying on the journey with Jesus Christ that we will come to greater faith in him. Too many of us believe that our growth in knowledge about our faith or in spiritual depth and awareness stops at a certain age, usually marked by graduation from an educational institution. But a spirit-filled relationship with Christ happens only through consistent pursuit of opportunities to increase our knowledge and understanding of the faith, opportunities to grow in prayer and to be shaped by praying with others, opportunities to bring others to believe through our witness--as evidenced in today's first reading. Let us look to Thomas, then, as our role model, perhaps even our patron, as we continue to grow in our faith in, and relationship with, the risen Christ. Copyright (c) J. S. Paluch Co.