

An amazing day ... an amazing promise!

Do you know what the Carbonara Effect is?

I sure didn't ... until I went up to **Chicago** in **early January** on vacation and spent some time with my cousins who introduced me to it ... it's a **TV program** about the ploys of a **handsome young Magician** by the name of **Michael Carbonara** ...
who has a way of making things seem to appear and disappear.

It's **absolutely amazing** to see the tricks he performs before unsuspecting people ...
and when they ask for an explanation of how he did it ...
he simply states that it's because of **the Carbonara Effect!**

Then he gets them to look at the camera and he admits that he's a Magician!

If you get a chance to check it out on **TV** or **You-Tube** ...
I think you'll find it to be ... **quite amazing.**

You know, there's **some other things that I find amazing** ...
like the number of people who don't go to Church on Sunday. (maybe Easter but not regularly)
Many say they know they should be going ...
but still they have a 101 reasons for not going.

And I'm also amazed at **the number of the people** who do go to Church ...
and can't wait to leave.

I **just can't imagine** being with someone who loves you ...
and looking at your watch to see **how much longer** you have till you can leave.

I'm **quite amazed** ... that **after you** once identify God as the **lover of all lovers** ...
that **you** wouldn't want to be in His presence ...
on a very regular basis ... for as long as possible.

No one loves you more than God ... **His love** is infinite and unconditional.

He is madly in love with **each and every one of us.**
And **how** do we respond to His love?
Many fail to make at least a **weekly 1-hour connection** with Him.

There are **168 hours** in a week and **what** does God ask of us? **One!**
To be with Him for **1** of those **168 hours** so that He can love us in a special way ...
through His words of Life and through His Beloved Son, Jesus, the bread of Life.

Why does He want us to go to Church? It's **His House** ...
and it's **there** that we can experience His love in a special and personal way!

That to me ... is what's truly amazing ...

that **God** wants so much for all of us to share ... in His own **blessed life**.

Yes ... He wants to share Himself with us!

And **He did this** in the most complete way when He sent His Only Begotten Son into our world to redeem us and put us back into a **right relationship** with Him ...

a **relationship where** we could now receive His Holy Spirit and be guided and supported safely through this **journey of life** and find our way to be with Him forever in **Heaven**.

We have an amazing God!

He does so many amazing things.

Like Michael Carbonara, He too can make things appear and disappear ...
but when God does it ... it's for real ... and not slight of hand.

In the weeks to come we're going to hear of many Resurrection appearances.

Today we hear of a Resurrection disappearance!

St. Mark tells us that **when the women reached Jesus' tomb**, "*they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe and they were utterly amazed.*"

And **the young man** says to them, "*Do not be amazed!*"

You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; He is not here."

Well **how** could they be anything but amazed? **Jesus disappeared!**

2 days ago, they buried His dead body in the tomb ...

and **now** it's not there ... why? ... because it was raised from the dead!

That never happened before.

Lazarus didn't raise himself from the dead ... he was raised by **Jesus**.

But this man Jesus ... raised Himself from the dead!

Wow! ... the **amazing power** of God.

That's what we celebrate today ... the Resurrection of Jesus ...

He raised Himself from the dead to win victory over the greatest consequence of **sin**, which is **death**, and to show us that **if** we follow Him we too can live forever like Him.

How do we follow Him?

We do this by believing in Him and being baptized.

St. Peter emphasized this on our **First Reading** from Acts, saying that,

"everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name."

And Paul emphasized this too in our **Second Reading** from **Colossians**, saying that,
“*When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear in glory.*”

What amazing promises!

If we follow Christ... we will receive forgiveness of sins and appear in glory!

Many of us believe these promises.

And many others have recently decided to take God up on His promises.

Over the past half a year, **18 people took the time to follow Jesus ...**

by formally studying His teachings ...

in **the Church** that **He** started some 2000 years ago ... **the Catholic Church.**

And then after prayer and discernment ... they freely chose last night ...

to come closer to Jesus by entering into the Catholic Church.

And they were not alone!

In parishes all over the world, **many men and women entered the Church last night ...**

In Northern Alabama ... **the Diocese of Birmingham** ... some **500 people** came in.

And **across the country** ... **over 100,000** people came in.

These people found the **Catholic Church to be ... truly amazing!**

“What’s so amazing about the Catholic Church?”

Here, we have **the Mass, the greatest most powerful prayer** in the world ...

The prayer instituted by Jesus Himself at the **Last Supper ... so that we can give worthy worship to **the Father** and receive God’s abundant blessings.**

Here, we have access to **all Seven Sacraments** ...

that **Jesus** left us as **channels** of God’s grace ...

including the Sacrament of **Confirmation** ... the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit,

the **Sacrament of Confession**, where God forgives us for our sins

and the Sacrament of **the Holy Eucharist**, which is **Jesus Himself** ...

that we take into our bodies for **supernatural strength** and **healing.**

Having access to all these **gifts** and **graces**

is **the reason** why people outside the Catholic Church want to come in.

They thirst and hunger for **what we have.** They thirst and hunger for **Him!**

Jesus is the reason why year after year ... century after century ...
people keep coming into the Catholic Church.

It **continues** to grow and grow, today numbering 1.2 billion Catholics around the world.

The **Catholic Church** is His Church. **Jesus** established it on the **rock foundation** of **St. Peter** and he sent His Holy Spirit to guide it in all truth until He comes again in glory.

This much we know ... **Jesus** keeps **His promises**.

He said he would rise again ..., and He did ...
in a **glorified Resurrected body** ... never to die again.

And **Jesus** promises that if we follow Him ... He will take us to the Father in Heaven ...
where we will be have **Eternal Life**.

What a great promise that is. **Imagine** living forever with **the Risen Jesus!**

We are **so very blessed**.

Let's rejoice in **this great day**, the **Day of the Resurrection** of our **Lord and Savior**.

It's **a day ... and a promise ...** that is **truly amazing!**