

Robert Selle Launches New Website: The REAL DEAL on Easter

Krista Moon

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With no prior experience, Robert Selle created a website to use as an outreach tool to give information about Easter and Jesus' Resurrection from a Unificationist-orientated alternative view.

Frustrated by conventional depictions of Easter and Jesus' resurrection, Robert "Bob" Selle, a Unificationist in Bowie, Maryland, created a new website, "The REAL DEAL on Easter," realdealeaster.com/ to provide a Unificationist-oriented, alternative view on Easter and to use it as an outreach tool.

The idea to create a website and to give information about a relatively new view of Easter came about two years ago. Selle and his family would sometimes attend a Baptist or Pentecostal church, or a Catholic mass to celebrate Easter. However, over the years, Selle wrote in an e-mail to Unification News, "Celebrating Easter was actually making me sadder as the years went by."

Everywhere Selle went, he felt the churches were missing the mark on Easter by a wide margin. "I felt Jesus wanted his followers (me included) to feel his humanity, and the purpose for which he lived and died, his passion and his anguish and his passion for humankind's liberation from Satan's sway way more than I was experiencing it in the various worship services," wrote Selle. He continued: "And I felt the pastors and priests in the various churches were cherry-picking Bible verses that thoughtlessly, superficially reinforced their own concepts about Easter."

"The result, I felt, was tragically to prop up the traditional notion of Easter, which was such a letdown for me, and such a disservice to the congregation," wrote Selle. The version of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Jesus that was served up to the people in attendance at the Easter celebrations were weak and pathetic, and they portrayed an Easter Jesus who was 100 percent triumphant in the face of continued horrific sin in the world and even among pious Christians, and a notion of salvation that was arrogant and unrealistic, according to Selle. "So, for the people's sake, as well as my own, I was really, really sad," wrote Selle.

A couple of months ago Selle started on his idea. First, he bought the rights to the domain name RealDealEaster.com from GoDaddy.com. Then, with no prior experience making websites, he followed the basic instructions at WordPress, a popular and website-building platform.

In his spare time, it took him two to three weeks to create the content and assemble the artwork. "I wanted to have classical art that depicted the various events of the Holy Week to convey a dignified, respectful tone to the site," wrote Selle. He added: "To choose them, I googled the events (such as 'triumphal entry into Jerusalem') and then chose an appropriate work of art by a painter who died at least 70 years ago, which is when copyrights on artworks expire."

The actual building of the website took a short three weeks. Selle said of his experience, "I was shocked how quick and easy it was to create an initial website using the WordPress template. I strongly urge other members to do the same depending on their particular passion." He added: "This is my first effort, and I'm still studying WordPress to learn if it offers any niceties that will help me correct a number of design imperfections that I see in the site."

Selle's ultimate hope for the website is to use it as a witnessing tool. "Through meeting people who comment on the site, I want to find people who are interested in this subject and educate them, if they are willing, on the finer points of the Divine Principle and to bring them to True Parents."

Selle has received feedback, ranging from criticism of design and wording to high praise. Dr. Tyler Hendricks, developer of ministry and curriculum for the Family Federation of World Peace and Unification U.S.A, praised Selle's efforts and wrote, "This is a well-designed, comprehensive, biblically-sound exposition of the truth about Easter. It is a good example of the creative insights of Unificationists who combine their faith with thorough research, writing and web skills, and take the loving initiative to get out the message of salvation, a message of which this world is in desperate need."