

EASTER SUNDAY 2016

Acts 10: 34, 37-43 + Psalm 118 + Colossians 3: 1-4 + John 20: 1-9

Holy Spirit Catholic Church: Sunday, March 27, 2016

Something happened to Peter between the time he saw the empty tomb on the day of the Resurrection and some 50 days later on Pentecost, when he stands courageously before others announcing that the one he thought was dead is risen. Something happened to Peter, the one who shrank in fear the night before Jesus was crucified, who now not only says he knows Jesus but proclaims him to be alive.

What happened? How did it happen?

Peter himself gives us a clue by what he says on Pentecost day in Jerusalem.

The Risen Jesus was made visible to those who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

In the breaking of the bread with the Risen Jesus, by sharing a cup of wine with the Crucified One now alive, Peter came to understand better the truth of the resurrection.

As those first disciples sat down to eat with the Risen Lord, their lives were transformed. Not only had their friend and teacher been restored to life by the power of the resurrection, but by eating with the Risen Jesus, their lives were given back to them anew.

Peter is restored to communion with his friend, Jesus, reconciled to the One whom he had denied knowing.

Doubting Thomas is restored to faith.

Mary Magdalene to hope.

As Peter and Thomas and Mary Magdalene ate and drank with the Risen Lord, their lives were transformed: despair overcome by hope, courage defeating fear, and all doubts swept away by the power of God's love stronger than death itself.

Even though those first witnesses to the resurrection did not at first understand the Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead, slowly their eyes were opened to the mighty mystery of new life offered to them in Jesus, Risen from the dead.

We come to better understand the resurrection as we sit down at table
Sunday after Sunday to eat and drink with the Risen Lord.
As he rises up in us here, sharing with us his Risen Life by means of blessed bread
and wine, our faith deepens---we know that he is alive, for he comes to live in us.

That is why the weekly celebration of the Eucharist is so central to our lives.
That is why the Church calls every celebration of the Eucharist the source of our faith and
the summit of our faith.

For in a world that often seems to be overcome by darkness,
we are too easily tempted to despair.
Acts of terror, whether they be in Paris or Brussels or San Bernadino, or OKC in 1995,
tempt us to think that the Risen Lord has abandoned us.
Where is the joy of the resurrection amidst such sadness and fear?
Which is why we are invited to this feast, to strengthen our trust
that in spite of all signs to the contrary, the Risen Lord is with us.

In a country so divided, evident by our divided political climate,
the Resurrection challenges us to work toward reconciliation and union.
As we become one with Christ Jesus and with one another in the breaking of bread,
so we are strengthened to work for the same kind of unity in a divided world.

The Resurrection is not simply an idea, not only a belief.
For it is not simply the idea of the Resurrection that sustains us,
but the Risen Christ himself.
He is alive. He remains with us.
He guides us daily.
He accompanies us through the dark valleys of life as Good Shepherd.
He shares our sufferings, and partakes in our joys.

CONCLUSION

Sunday after Sunday we are reminded of Jesus' transformation
and the need for our own in the words of the Mass.
Every week as we celebrate the day of the Resurrection, a day set apart,
we recall not only how God the Father's love lifted Jesus from the grave,
but also how the Father's love lifts us up and restores us to life anew.
And it's all right there in words we hear week after week.

"Take this all of you and eat of it. This is my body, given for you.

Do this in memory of me.”

We are called to receive the body of Christ, but we are also called to build it.

We are called to receive the body of Christ so that our indifference might be transformed into care for others.

To have our eyes opened to the suffering of others and to walk with them in their pain.

To live lives of mercy, by moving outside the boundaries of our own wants and comforts.

Take, give, do. These words of Jesus spoken at that meal before he died live on in him.

Take time to pray. Give of yourself. Do something kind daily for someone.

In living merciful lives inspired by the Resurrection of the Merciful One,
we become the Body of Christ.

By living merciful lives inspired by the Resurrection, we also care for the Body of Christ.

Fr. Joseph A. Jacobi