

Easter vigil

## **The Resurrection of Jesus**

Matthew 28:1-10.

We have come to this most mysterious of nights. I wonder at the path of your travel since you were marked with ash 46 days ago. Do you understand your process? I don't, but I trust that God has walked with me through the hills and valleys and I have been where I needed to be. Our readings tonight have surveyed the wondrous works of God from Creation, through epic events of the Older Testament. God's mighty power is clearly articulated in those stories and in Isaiah's prophecy. How do we hold these stories, and God's glory demonstrated by the empty tomb, with the stresses and realities of our lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? What does this all mean for mean for us?

During Holy Week we have prayed "if we have died with him we shall live with him". What part of you has died and what is ready to pass-over to new life in these mystical hours? For a variety of personal reasons, I feel as if I have failed Lent. I have read widely and I could trot out a variety of theological themes. Perhaps Ronald Rolheiser on God's seeming silence at the Crucifixion, or Telhiard de Chardin's proposition that the universe changed at a molecular level when Jesus was brought back life. But it was what was shared in this faith community this week that has helped me to make meaning. At Eucharist on Tuesday Kim posed the question: if you encountered the risen Lord and he said "follow me" what would you do? On Wednesday Jamie spoke passionately about the call to intimacy at the core of Jesus' ministry. Yesterday, Mother Jill broke new ground for me as she spoke on love and the Crucifixion.

Now we all have different learning preferences. The oral, aural or kinaesthetic. Some of us function better in the realm of soul the place where physical attributes connect with all of the above and are fed by images music and poetry. Powerful and personal questions were what I needed to ground myself in a mystery that feels beyond comprehension.

Mixed in with all of the adult reflection there has been a steady stream of sharing with children. Out of what seems to me to have been a maelstrom of experience, I have come back Francis Dorff's Theological model of spiritual growth that I have shared with you before and it goes like this. Let go in faith,

Let be in hope and Let grow in love. I believe these same steps were required of the women who faced the empty tomb.

An earthquake, an angel with words that must have sounded unbelievable: “He has been raised from the dead’ ” and then in their fear and joy, they meet Jesus!

They had to let go of the reality that they knew, so as to encounter impossibility. Two worlds had to collide to enable new understanding to grow. Is there anything different facing us here tonight?

We are almost through the **Triduum**, but this night, is the time of passing over. The promise and demonstration of God’s glory is the light to accompany us. God’s Easter power is about to dawn. The work that will be done in each of us is just beginning. We have weeks ahead to stand before the empty tomb. It is in that open space that change can come. May we let go, let be and let grow.

Praise be to God! Alleluia!

#### Reference

Francis Dorff *The Art of Passing Over: An Invitation to Living Creatively*. Paulist Press 1988.

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