Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



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“Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said” (Matt 28:5).

Vigil to Breakthrough

Gn 1:1—2:2; Gn 22:1-18; Ex 14:15—15:1; Is 54:5-14; Is 55:1-11; Bar 3:9-15, 32--4:4; Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6; Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28; Rom 6:3-11; Mt 28:1-10

Easter has been called the “end of the story appearing in the middle.” Because we now believe that love is stronger than death and that Christ has by his cross opened the way to our divine destiny, we can live fully and without fear as his followers.

Easter also marks the threshold between the first Creation and the new Creation, the restoration of God’s original intent for the universe and for humanity transformed by Christ.

The Easter Vigil approaches this central revelation with symbols and storytelling. A light is kindled in the darkness, and the sweeping narrative of salvation, from Genesis to Gospel, illuminates the biblical passages the church celebrates that show God’s plan to heal the wounds of sin and death through the obedience and surrender of Jesus.

By his death on the cross, divine mercy was poured out on all of us, and even more astonishing, while we were still sinners. What no human virtue, sacrifice or moral perfection could merit was given freely from the heart of God. The living Jesus now indwells every community of faith, transforming us by baptism and the Eucharist to be his crucified and risen body in the world for the redemption of the world.

The most effective Easter proclamation comes from Easter People, those who now live the pattern of dying to self in order to rise with Christ in service and compassion. Easter is not only what happened to Jesus, but what is happening to us. Love sets us free to live our brief sojourns in this world with courage and insight, knowing we are destined for eternal communion within the Trinity.

How will the world know we are Easter People? This is where our faith moves from idea to action, from belief to practice. The risen Christ in Matthew’s Gospel goes ahead of the disciples into Galilee. There they will find him in the hungry, thirsty,

naked, rejected, sick, imprisoned and persecuted (Matt 25). We will know Jesus by imitating his advocacy for the outcast, the widow and orphan, by his openness to sinners, strangers and foreigners.

Easter is more than Sunday; it is a lifestyle and a lifelong commitment to be another Christ in the world. What we could not have imagined for ourselves is made possible by his love for us. Our fulfillment is to release the Christ in each of us, uniquely positioned in our specific circumstances to be Christ to others.

Whether our life in Christ is hidden or called into the light for the good of others and for some important work, all of us are meant to come to maturity in the promise of our baptisms. We will do this by carrying our individual crosses—the burden of self in the context of our personal time on earth.

Easter means that by the power of Christ, even our small, imperfect lives will share in the glory of God's redemptive work in history. What we celebrate today in Word, song and ritual, let us live each day. Alleluia. Happy Easter!