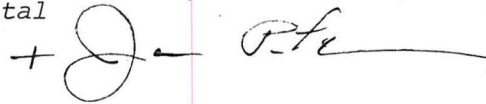


memo *from the desk of*

Bishop James P. Lyke

St. Vincent Charity Hospital
CALIX
Palm Sunday
March 27, 1983

+ 

I. *Reflection of the Redemption of Christ: they bear in their bodies the landmarks of Jesus.*

II. *The Church regards you with special affection:*

A. *Thanks to the efforts of medical science, we understand more fully your condition: we know that you are not sinners but sufferers:*

*anyone who is ill, suffers;
anyone who suffers, is a precious child of God*

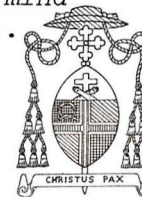
B. *Your witness*

1. *your ministry of suffering is not only a personal sacrifice but a sacrifice for the Church;*

2. *just as Christ own prayer and suffering was redemptive*

3. *most importantly, you are a witness of the thirsting Christ: on the cross Christ uttered, "I thirst" :: by the thirst of Christ, your own thirst is healed: you continue to thirst, but for Christ;*

C. *Scripture: "The Lord God is my help; therefore, I am not disgraced" (Isaiah)... "Rather he emptied himself and took the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men" (Phillipians).... You understand the condition of slavery; thus, you know the mind and feelings of Christ in a special way...*



memo *from the desk of*

Bishop James P. Lyke

+ *J. P. Lyke*

*Holy Thursday
St. John Cantius
March 31, 1983*

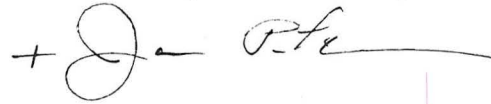
1. *Vlues of the world turned upside down(power)*
2. *Principles of human interaction given different foundation (equality)*
3. *Ideas of superiority changed (what makes a person great?)*



memo *from the desk of*

Holy Thursday
St. Emeric
7:30 pm

Bishop James P. Lyke

+ 

Introduction

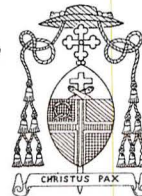
- A. Archbishop Romero - killed at the Eucharistic Table
- B. Cardinal Mindzenty - martyr for the cause of justice
in your homeland

The memory of both these heroic bishops evoke profound responses of respect and love. It is the memory of people who GAVE THEIR LIFE for PEOPLE, of a SERVANT

Body

- A. They help us understand what Christ has said in the Gospel: "wht I have done for you, you also must do."
- B. Gospel notations:
 - a. on the last day of his life, his disciples fight for the first place;
 - b. nature of quarrel: fight for the first place, with no yielding:
 - international: IRAN
 - national: strikes
 - city: city council/mayor
 - family circle
 - c. Christ feelings:
 - 1) hurt by friends:
not our enemies who make us suffer,
but our friends
 - 2) disappointment with our own lives:
distance between who we are and
who we say we are
 - 3) failure in life: everything we have
have labored for has been done the
wrong way

Christ experienced all these humiliations,
yet his response: further humiliation,
more service, more generosity. THIS IS
JESUS ANSWER. "YOUR ATTITUDE MUST BE
CHRIST'S.... (Phillipians)

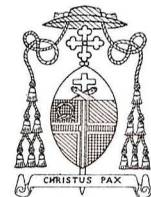


memo *from the desk of*

Bishop James P. Lyke

My Brother Priests & Deacons, + *J. P. Lyke*
First Comm. & Sac. in S. Leo,
Catechumen —————
Life-Changing

Introduction — the depth experience
A. all of us can point to one
B. depth experience of the "key"



Easter Mystery Ground on 3 report
kind of evidence:

1) Empty tomb

2) personal witness of those followers:

Peter - opened

John - faith

Women

3) Biological perspective

St. Leo
Holy Saturday
April 5, 1980

"Why do you search for the living One among the dead?
He is not here! He has been raised up!!

I feel like Paul... I Corinthians 2

"No, what we utter is God's wisdom: a mysterious, a hidden wisdom."

Eye has not seen, ear has not heard,
nor has it so much as dawned on man,
what God has prepared for those who love him.

My message and my preaching had none of the persuasive force
of 'wise' argumentation,
but the convincing power of the Spirit.

the Grand Canyon Experience

- a. God has given me a glimpse of himself - that is all I could take, a glimpse
- b. this God

has created me in his divine image
has dashed all my enemies

I will sing to the Lord for he is gloriously triumphant:
horse and chariot he has cast into the sea

his descendants are as countless as the stars of the sky
and the sands on the seashore

- c. this God, in Christ, has conquered death;
death, that ultimate human fear, is not longer the final act --
not for Christ, not for us:

If we have been united to him through likeness
to his death, so shall we be through a like
resurrection!

- d. thus, we are a people of destiny, of hope

The implications for life today

1. *First and foremost: the Resurrection validates the entire life of Christ, his person and his message: Jesus - WAY, TRUTH, AND LIFE, the pattern for our living. The Resurrection authenticates Jesus' every word and deed.*
2. *The human solutions of the death of violence replaced by non-violence*

<i>whether international</i>	<i>alienation</i>	<i>reconciliation</i>
<i>or in the family</i>	<i>conflict</i>	<i>unity</i>
	<i>war</i>	<i>peace</i>
	<i>pride</i>	<i>humility</i>
	<i>injustice</i>	<i>justice</i>
	<i>domination</i>	<i>service</i>
3. *The good news of sociology, psychology, political science, technology cannot solve the materialism, alienation, and consumerism of our age. Only the GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST!*
4. *Resurrection = a new direction, a new spirit, a new sphere of living!*

YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE
Black Catholic Youth Conference
Notre Dame College
South Euclid, Ohio
April 4, 1982

"Were You There?"
Homily by
Most Reverend James P. Lyke, O.F.M., Ph.D.

Introduction - poem, "Who Can Be Born Black," by Mari Evans (with comments)

I begin by sharing with you a deep feeling, an expression of profound appreciation, so profound that I can hardly utter it.

I am grateful to Sr. Phyllis Marie; we owe our highest praise to her for founding this organization, this movement of Black Catholic Input, and for initiating the first of an annual conference.

I am grateful to those founding young brothers and sisters and the present BCI membership, who with Sister Phyllis Marie, had a vision and worked to give shape to that vision.

Then, there are those special others, too numerous to name, whom Sister lists in the last pages of your program.

Clearly, Archbishop Hickey and now Bishop Pilla, Sister Christopher and the Sisters of Notre Dame and Father Jenne and Catholic Charities, have been with Sister from the beginning; we are so grateful to them. Eileen Matteo and the present BCI Board and their colleagues worked so hard to bring this day about. Thanks to them, abundant thanks.

Finally, I thank the Pastoral staffs ministering in the Black Community--those dedicated lay men and women, religious sisters and brothers, deacons and priests, who daily believe in the youth of the Black Community and untiringly work in their behalf.

My brothers and sisters, this is Passion Sunday, the day on which the Church remembers the suffering and death of Jesus and focuses its attention on that great display of love that was crowned with the Lord's triumphant Resurrection.

Significantly, it is also the anniversary of the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., a contemporary and classic symbol of the Christian person who takes up the cross and follows Christ.

My friends, Christ spent his whole life in absolute, total, and unconditional self-giving. Christ healed, consoled, forgave, reconciled, suffered excruciating torture and died an abominable death. Christ gave his back to those who beat him and his face to those who lashed and spit upon him. (Isaiah 50:4-7) He experienced the mockings and scoffings of the crowd and the abandonment of his closest allies. In the midst of it all Jesus exclaimed, "The Lord God is my help; therefore, I am not disgraced." (Responsorial Psalm) Christ emptied himself and took the form of a slave in birth and in death. (Philippians 2:6-11)

Bishop James P. Lyke, O.F.M.
April 4, 1982
Page 2

He was obedient to the Father -- to the very end. Christ willingly gave his body to execution because, antecedently, he had already given up his mind, heart, soul and will in unconditional obedience to the Father. Christ was the Good Samaritan who took any risk to give life and hope to others.

The might of Jesus's divinity was revealed in the power of his service. In this service, Jesus was the itinerant preacher and the bearer of Good News: the one who walked with and among men and women of his day and time.

Jesus was there, in his movement and journey to Jerusalem, when the pains and needs and hopes of others reached out to him.

He was there, in the need for their baptism by John; in the joy of their marriages and feasts; in the grief of the death of a friend called Lazarus.

He was there in Gethsemani to discern the will of his Father and the terror of crucifixion...

Jesus seemed always to be there to do the will of the Father.

The slaves, our African forebears, were profoundly conscious that Jesus was there for us, and they realized how critical it is for us to be there for Jesus. They knew that the service and ministry of Jesus would live on in us. So, they composed a beautiful spiritual, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?"

In the spirit of this spiritual, may I ask you--were you there? (Passion acc. to Mark 14 ff.)

Were you Simon of Cyrene, who courageously stepped from the jeering crowds and helped him carry the cross? Were you there?

Were you Veronica, who compassionately wiped his face with the cloth and later unfolded it to see its imprint? Were you there?

Were you Dismas, the Good Thief, who said, "Father, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Were you there?

Were you Mary Magdalene, Salome, or Joanna, or Joses, brave women who attended to Jesus's needs and stayed with him to the end? Were you there?

Were you Joseph of Arimathea, who faced cowardly and blind rulers, and asked for the Lord's body? Were you there?

Were you Mary, his mother, and our mother, who stood beneath the cross and, despite the deepest anguish, repeated those words that brought Jesus's birth and now his death - "be it done unto me according to your word." Were you there with our Mother, Mary?

Bishop James P. Lyke, O.F.M.

April 4, 1982

Page 3

To be a Christian, my brothers and sisters, is to become so like Christ, that we, too, give our lives for the other. This is what made Martin Luther King a great follower of the Saviour. He followed the call of the Master to live and die for others.

Are you with Martin King on the road to Calvary, when he says, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?' Are you there on Calvary's road with Martin?

Are you with Martin as he looks at the jeering crowd and says, "We must live together as brothers or die together as fools?" Are you there?

Are you with Martin as he climbs Calvary's hill with Jesus and utters, "I've decided to stick to love. Hate is too hard to bear"? Are you there?

Are you with Martin when the sword of the assassin's bullet gouges his side and he says, "Jesus knew that the eye-for-an-eye philosophy would leave every-one blind"? Are you there?

Are you with Martin as he joins Christ upon the cross and says, "The question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be"? Are you there?

Think, my young friends, of all the good that has happened in the Black Community, in this nation, and all over the world because Martin King embraced the cross of Christ, because he chose to be a "man for others." "The ultimate measure of man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience," said Martin, "but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. The true neighbor will risk his position, his prestige, and even his life for the welfare of others."

You, young brothers and sisters, have an inner yearning for greatness and a powerful capacity to perform noble deeds. You have explosive energies that may be used for good. You are made for heroism.

With all this potential, however, you face the temptations of your youth world - to escape from a troubled world into drugs, crime, sex, or even suicide. You, too, can become part of the disturbing statistics. As many as a third of the nation's 17 million teenagers "seem unable to roll with life's punches," says one sociologist. "They grow up lacking the internal controls needed to stay on course." Over one third of major crimes are committed by people under 20 years of age. Alcoholism among youth has grown to epidemic proportions, with 15% of high schoolers considered problem drinkers. Among 15-24 year olds, suicide is the third leading cause of death, after homicide and accidents. In ten years the number of teenage suicides has doubled. And, most importantly, with all people today, you grow up in a world of alienation and a lack of clear moral standards.

Bishop James P. Lyke, O.F.M.
April 4, 1982
Page 4

Still, with this vast array of sadness, we still have hope in you, in your innate goodness as a child of God, in your search for meaning and purpose, in your desire for the good, the right, and the true.

To live as you want to live, to create the quality of life you want to create, to bring about the world you long for, you will have to take up your cross and follow Jesus.

To be loved and cared for and to display respect, gratitude, and consideration for others is a way to bring about this world. But, it requires cross-bearing.

To be given increasing independence and responsibility as you grow older and at the same time to work caringly and sensitively with others is a way to bring about this world. But, it requires cross-bearing.

To expect loyalty and justice from others and, simultaneously, to treat others fairly and equitably is a way to bring about this world. But, it requires cross-bearing.

Remember, for the Christian the accent is always on the giving: it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

My friends, you have had a long and studied day. You have listened and learned, and you have given the best of yourselves. In the spirit of the black poet Alfred Duckett, you may ask:

Where are we to go when this is done?
Will we slip into old, accustomed ways,
Finding remembered notches, one by one?
Thrashing a hapless way through quickening haze? . . .
Where are we to go when this is through?

Will you respond, I shall look to Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life?
Will you look to this Passion Sunday Eucharist as another beginning in life's journey to purpose, meaning, and fulfillment. Will you sing, "Jesus Is the Answer"?

Good Friday
St. Vincent de Paul
April 9, 1982 - 3:00 p.m.

My brothers and sisters, today we commemorate the passion and crucifixion of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Today the Church focuses its attention on that great display of love that was crowned with the Lord's triumphant Resurrection.

Christ spent his whole life, my friends, in absolute, total and unconditional self-giving. Christ healed, consoled, forgave, reconciled, suffered excruciating torture and died an abominable death. He experienced the mockings and scoffings of the crowd and the abandonment of his closest allies.

"He was spurned and avoided by men,
a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,
One of those from whom men hid their faces,
spurned, and we held him in no esteem....
He was pierced for our offenses,
crushed for our sins." (Isaiah 52:14-53:12)

Christ emptied himself and took the form of a slave in birth and in death. He was obedient to the Father - to the very end. Christ willingly gave his body to execution because, antecedently, he had already given his mind, heart, soul, and will in unconditional obedience to the Father. Christ was the Good Samaritan who took any risk to give life and hope to others.

In this self-offering, Christ suffered and died, not for himself, but for others. Indeed, this self-giving and service was the characteristic of his whole life. In this service, Jesus was the itinerant preacher and the bearer of good news: the one who walked with and among men and women of his day and time.

page 2

Jesus was there, in his movement and journey to Jerusalem, when the pains and needs and hopes of others reached out to him.

Jesus was there, in the need for their baptism by John, in the joy of their marriages and feasts, in the grief of the death of a friend called Lazarus.

Jesus was there in Gethsemani to discern the will of his Father and the terror of the crucifixion.

Jesus was and is - always - the man of service and self-giving for us.

My friends, where are we on the Way of the Cross? Are we a Simon of Cyrene, who courageously stepped from the jeering crowds and helped him carry the cross?

A Veronica, who compassionately wiped his face with the cloth, and later unfolded it to see its imprint?

A Dismas, the Good Thief, who uttered, "Father, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

A Mary Magdalen, Salome, Joanna, or Joses, brave women who attended to Jesus' needs and stayed with him to the end?

A Joseph of Arimathea, who faced cowardly and blind rulers, and asked for the Lord's body.

Mary, his mother and ours, who stood beneath the cross and, despite the deepest anguish, repeated those words that brought Jesus birth and now his death - "be it done unto me according to your word."

My brothers and sisters, on this Good Friday, we know how deeply the Lord Jesus loves us.

SECOND READING: Heb. 4:14-16; 5:7-9

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

We have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God; let us hold fast to our profession of faith. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet never sinned. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and favor and to find help in time of need.

In the days when he was in the flesh, Christ offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to God, who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when perfected, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him. — This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Phil. 2:8-9

STAND
(382) N. T. F.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when the crucified my Lord.

Holy Saturday
St. Philomena
April 11, 1982

This celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus is a celebration of victory:

1. Victory over death

- no other makes this claim
- comfort at the death of a loved one

2. Victory over sin

"The most precious thing about Jesus is the way in which he trusts us on the field of defeat."

- Christ has healed the rupture between God and the universe
- between God and humankind
- that victory over sin is re-enacted sacramentally each in sincere contrition I place my in God's hand and seek reconciliation

3. Victory over life

victory over the old self of self-centeredness:

pride
greed
lust
sloth
gluttony
envy
anger

- what meaning would life have if it ended in death
- because of our confidence in Christ's victory we can also overcome psychological and spiritual death:

the death of despair to the life of hope;

the death of fear to the life of trust

the death of hate to the life of love

the death of war to the life of peace

victory over the old self of a self-centered world:

poverty
hunger
unemployment
abortion
violence
war
materialism
consumerism

4. It is for this reason that our catechumens present themselves to the Church this evening. They have been searching for meaning - for life's purpose and life's ultimate end. They are a witness to us and move us to re-confirm our own faith.

5. On this solemn night, let us be the first to reach the empty tomb;

the first to look at the body of Jesus

the first to see the wrappings and headband of glory

the first to proclaim, "JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!"

Our old self was crucified with him, so that the sinful body might be destroyed and we might be slaves to sin no longer. Romans 6

You need not be amazed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, the one who was crucified. He has been raised up; he is not here. Mark 16

The Church of St. Leo
The Easter Vigil Liturgy
April 2, 1983

My Dear Friends in Christ,

We have come together to celebrate the victory of Christ over sin and death, to celebrate the conquest of the Saviour over the forces of evil at work in the world, to celebrate the triumph of the Risen Lord over all human limitation.

"Why do you search for the living one among the dead?

He is not here! He has been raised up!" (Luke 24:5-6)

We have come together to celebrate a new creation - a new Genesis of Redemption, a new Exodus toward the Promised Land, a new convocation of the nations.

"You shall be my people and I shall be your God."

(Ezekiel 36:28)

Thanks to the salvific waters of baptism,

"...we must consider ourselves dead to sin, but alive for God in Christ Jesus." (Romans 6:11)

"Through baptism into his death we were buried with him, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life."

"O truly Blessed and Holy Night. This is the night when Jesus Christ broke the chains of death and rose triumphant from the grave. This is the night when Christians everywhere, washed clean of sin and freed from all defilement, are restored to grace and grow together in holiness." (Exsultet)

page 2

How true rings the words of the poet:

If Easter be not true,
Then all the lilies low must lie;
The Flanders poppies fade and die;
The spring must lose her fairest bloom,
For Christ were still within the tomb --
If Easter be not true.

If Easter be not true,
Then faith must mount on broken wing;
Then hope no more immortal spring;
Then love must lose her mighty urge;
Life prove a phantom, death a dirge --
If Easter be not true.

If Easter be not true,
'Twere foolishness the cross to bear;
He died in vain who suffered there;
What matter though we laugh or cry,
Be good or evil, live or die,
If Easter be not true?

If Easter be not true -
But it is true, and Christ is risen!
And mortal spirit from its prison
Of sin and death with Him may rise!
Worth-while the struggle, sure the prize,
Since Easter, aye, is true!

____Henry H. Barstow

This celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus is a celebration of victory:

1. Victory over death

- no other makes this claim
- what meaning would life have if it ended in death?
- comfort at the death of a loved one!

2. Victory over sin

- Christ has healed the rupture between God & hnknd
- that victory over sin is re-enacted sacramentally each time in sincere contrition I place myself in God's hand and seek reconciliation

"The most precious thing about Jesus is the way in which he trusts us on the field of defeat."

3. Victory over life

victory over the old self of self-centeredness

Because of our confidence in Christ's victory we can also overcome psychological and spiritual death:

pride	gluttony		the death of despair to the life of hope
greed	envy	□□•□□	the death of fear to the life of trust
lust	anger		the death of hate to the life of love
sloth			the death of violence to the life of peace

"Our old self was crucified with him, so that the sinful body might be destroyed and we might be slaves to sin no longer. (Romans 6:6)

page 4

3. Victory over life, cont.

victory over the old self of a self-centered world

poverty	abortion	racism	age-ism
hunger	violence	sexism	
unemployment	war	classism	
	materialism		

It is for this reason that our catechumens present themselves to the Church this evening. They have been searching for meaning - for life's purpose and life's ultimate end. They are a witness to us and move us to re-affirm our own faith.

Conclusion - "You need not be amazed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, the one who was crucified. He has been raised up! He is not here! (Mark 16)

On this solemn night, let us be the first to reach the empty tomb, the first to see the stone rolled back, the first to see the wrappings and headband of glory, the first to fall to the ground in worship, the first to hear, 'He is risen'; and the first to proclaim, "JESUS CHRIST IS LORD" and, again and again, to celebrate this triumph in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist:

O Sacred Banquet, in which Christ is received,
the memory of his passion is renewed,
the mind is filled with grace,
and a pledge of future glory is given us!

My Risen Lord, I feel thy strong protection;
I see thee stand among the graves today;
I am the Way, the Life, the Resurrection,
I hear thee say,
And all the burdens I have carried sadly
Grow light as blossoms on an April day;
My cross becomes a staff, I journey gladly
This Easter Day.

-Author Unknown

The Church of Our Lady of Mercy
Easter Sunday Morning, 11:30 a.m.
April 3, 1983

My Dear Friends in Christ,

We have come together to celebrate the victory of Christ over sin and death, to celebrate the conquest of the Saviour over the forces of evil at work in the world, to celebrate the triumph of the Risen Lord over all human limitation.

"Why do you search for the living one among the dead?
He is not here! He has been raised up!" (Luke 24:5-6)

We have come together to celebrate a new creation - a new Genesis of Redemption, a new Exodus toward the Promised Land, a new convocation of the nations.

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3. Victory over life, cont.

victory over the old self of a self-centered world

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hunger	violence	sexism	
unemployment	war	classism	
	materialism		

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Conclusion - "You need not be amazed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, the one who was crucified. He has been raised up! He is not here! (Mark 16)

On this solemn night, let us be the first to reach the empty tomb, the first to see the stone rolled back, the first to see the wrappings and headband of glory, the first to fall to the ground in worship, the first to hear, 'He is risen'; and the first to proclaim, "JESUS CHRIST IS LORD" and, again and again, to celebrate this triumph in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist:

O Sacred Banquet, in which Christ is received,
the memory of his passion is renewed,
the mind is filled with grace,
and a pledge of future glory is given us!

My Risen Lord, I feel thy strong protection;
I see thee stand among the graves today;
I am the Way, the Life, the Resurrection,
 I hear thee say,
And all the burdens I have carried sadly
Grow light as blossoms on an April day;
My cross becomes a staff, I journey gladly
 This Easter Day.

-Author Unknown

1984

HOLY THURSDAY

Exodus 12: 1-8, 11-14
I Corinthians 11: 23-26
John 13: 1-15

I can still see this 55 year old woman trudging toward the communion rail, paining from severe arthritis but with tears of joy trickling down her round brown face like drops of fresh clear spring water. Nothing in her long life could supplant this journey of faith. This was her personal Exodus event: loins girt, sandals on her feet, a staff in hand, moving slowly yet like one in flight. One could see the gleam in her eyes, like a two-tiered candelabra that commanded attention. It is the Passover of the Lord, her first Holy Communion, at the age of fifty-five. Her name was Ora Lyke, and the parish priest had told her that her name in Latin meant "prayer." And, how she had prayed for This Day - "My Lord, what a morning," she uttered in the age-old spiritual, "when the sun begins to shine." Ora Lyke was my mother.

I recall my mother's First Holy Communion on a Day like Holy Thursday. This Liturgy has a special meaning for me and my family since our religious background was Protestant, of the Baptist tradition. For me and my family, the mystery of the Holy Eucharist, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, remains the most precious gift of our Catholic Faith. For us the Eucharist sums up what it means to be Catholic. When we became Catholics, we knew that we had found a spiritual treasure that was never offered in our Baptist expression of the faith.

page 2

Holy Thursday

Thus, sisters and brothers, my message to you this evening is this: treasure this wonderful and mystery-filled gift of the Eucharistic Food. Treasure its reality and its meaning.

Treasure its reality. Under these humble signs of bread and wine, Jesus, the New Lamb, slaughtered for a humanity yearning for freedom from sin, is present to us really and truly: "This is my body given for you.... This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

By a word, the Word embodied
Changes common bread and wine:
Bread becomes his holy body,
Wine is made his blood divine!
Though this truth evades the senses,
Faith unveils the sacred sign!

"Every time...you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes!"

Yes, treasure its reality. But, treasure also its meaning. G.A. Johnston Ross told of an incident that occurred years ago during the celebration of the Lord's supper in a little mission church in New Zealand. A line of worshippers had just knelt at the altar rail when suddenly from among them, a young native arose and returned to his pew. Some minutes later, however, he returned

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Holy Thursday

to his place at the communion rail.

Afterward, a friend inquired why he had done this. He replied, "When I went forward and knelt, I found myself side by side with a man who some years ago had slain my father and whom I had vowed to kill. I felt I could not partake with him, so I returned to my pew.

But as I sat there, my mind went back to a picture of the Upper Room, with its table set, and I heard a voice saying, "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another." And then I saw a cross with a man nailed upon it and heard the same voice saying, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

It was then I arose and returned to the altar rail.

(cf, 1984 The Ministers Manual, Doran)

Yes, treasure the reality of the Eucharist. But, treasure also its meaning. The Eucharist was instituted within the context of a family meal, the Passover. A family eating together at the family table is a sign of love; a family partaking of the same food is a sign of unity. And so, our unity with the Father in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit is a corporate, a community reality, not an individual one only. It has profound meaning for our living. It is impossible, friends, to come into union with Christ without coming into union with other members

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Holy Thursday

of God's family -- whether of this country or another one, whether of my class, ethnic or racial origin or another one, whether of my sex or another, whether of my parish or another. The Eucharist draws us to all, even those of other religious traditions and even those who do not believe in God: just as the Cross of Christ is a sign above the nations, for it was the same Lord who commanded, "Go, teach all nations."

This union with Christ in the Eucharist finds its expression in charity. This is why at the Last Supper Jesus gave both an example and command of love. His example of charity was one of practical service to the apostles: he washed their feet. Has anyone of us here ever washed someone's feet? I mean, do we carry within ourselves this sense of being first of all the servant of others? Can we say that we place ourselves second to the needs of others. Is this our disposition toward other people. Does the Christian attitude of service characterize our relationships with others? ::

Do you understand what I just did for you?

...if I washed your feet -

I who am Teacher and Lord -

then you must wash each other's feet.

What I just did was to give you an example:

as I have done, so must you do.

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Holy Thursday

My Brothers and Sisters, we are with Mary and the apostles in the Upper Room. Soon we shall partake of this Blessed Bread and Drink and then venerate the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharistic Procession. May all of us revere this Presence of the Lord. My Brother priests, this Sacrament is especially entrusted to us, - we are agents of Christ who invoke the power of the Spirit upon the gifts of bread and wine. May we be like Christ, the servant of all.

Eucharistic Ministers, you have been chosen to give this Eucharist Food to those yearning for Lord and to carry the Sacrament to the Sick. May you also carry the Lord in your hearts.

Dear People of Immaculate Heart, Sunday after Sunday you nourish yourselves with the Precious Body and Blood of the Lord. Led to an ever deepened conversion of mind and heart, may you take this forgiving Lord to all whom you meet, in your families, at your places of work, in your social organizations, to the poor and to those thirsting for justice.

Praise we Christ's Immortal Body
And His Precious Blood we praise:
Born of royal Virgin Mother,
He shall reign for endless days!
Dying once to save all nations,
Evermore He wins our praise!

AMEN!!

GOOD FRIDAY

Poets and preachers have often compared two dynamic young men who both died at age 33--Jesus of Nazareth and Alexander the Great. Alexander lived a privileged life. As a boy he was tutored personally by the immortal Aristotle. He was a man of great wealth and power. As a military conqueror, he was nearly invincible. Indeed, there came a time when Alexander wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. And yet he died a hopeless alcoholic at age 33.

One unknown poet put it this way:

Jesus and Alexander died at 33;
One lived and died for self; the other for you and me.
The Greek died upon a throne, the Jew died upon a cross,
One's life a triumph seemed, the other's but a loss.
One walked with mighty men and the other walked alone.
One shed the whole world's blood, the other gave his own.

Jesus and Alexander died at 33.
The Greek died at Babylon, the Jew at Calvary.
One made himself god, but the one who was God made himself less.
One lived but to blast, the other but to bless.
When died the Greek, forever fell his throne of swords,
But Jesus died and arose to live forever,
King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

My brothers and sisters, today we commemorate the passion and crucifixion of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Today the Church focuses its attention on that great display of love that was crowned with the Lord's triumphant Resurrection.

Christ spent his whole life, my friends, in absolute, total and unconditional self-giving. Christ healed, consoled, forgave, reconciled, suffered excruciating torture and died an abominable death. He experienced the mockings and scoffings of the crowd and the abandonment of his closest allies.

"He was spurned and avoided by men,
a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,
One of those from whom men hid their faces,
spurned, and we held him in no esteem. . .
He was pierced for our offenses,
crushed for our sins." (Isaiah 52:14-53:12)

Christ emptied himself and took the form of a slave in birth and in death. He was obedient to the Father - to the very end. Christ willingly gave his body to execution because, antecedently, he had already given his mind, heart, soul, and will in unconditional obedience to the Father. Christ was the Good Samaritan who took any risk to give life and hope to others.

In this self-offering, Christ suffered and died, not for himself, but for others. Indeed, this self-giving and service was the characteristic of his whole life. Jesus was the itinerant preacher and the bearer of good news: the one who walked with and among men and women of his day and time.

Jesus was there with the people, with the common poor people and the uncommon wealthy people.

He was there in the journey to Jerusalem, when the pains and needs, and hopes of others reached out to him.

He was there in the need for their baptism by John, in the joy of their marriages and feasts, in the grief of the death of a friend called Lazarus.

He was there in Gethsemani to discern the will of his Father and the terror of the crucifixion.

Jesus was and is - always - the man of service and self-giving for us.

My friends, where are we on the Way of the Cross? "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" Are we a Simon of Cyrene, who courageously stepped from the jeering crowds ^{to} ~~and~~ help him carry the cross?

A Veronica, who compassionately wiped his face with the cloth, and later unfolded it to see its imprint?

A Dismas, the Good Thief, who uttered, "Father, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

A Mary Magdalen, Salome, Joanna, or Joses, brave women who attended to Jesus's needs and stayed with him to the end?

A Joseph of Arimethea, who faced cowardly and blind rulers, and asked for the Lord's body.

~~Yes~~, where are we on the Way of the Cross, as Jesus is crucified
anew *in this day and time*

in the hopeless poverty and hunger of millions,
in the violence of war, revolution, terrorism, that
wrenches the sacred flesh of our brothers and
sisters around the world,
in unjust and exploitive economic systems that crush
the aspirations of the marginal and the poor,
in the senseless disregard for the unborn child
expressed in the violence of abortion,
in the insensitivity to the dignity and rights of
our elderly,
in the subjugation of family life to the miscon-
ceptions and distortions of TV soap operas, the
materialism and consumerism of contemporary society,
and a mentality that views children as burdens
and family time together as boredom.

Yes, where are we on the Way of the Cross as Jesus is crucified
anew?

Mary, His mother and ours, who stood beneath the
cross and, despite the deepest anguish, repeated those words *spoken*
that Jesus's birth and now his death - "be it done unto me
according to your word." Do we stand with Mary at the foot
of the Cross?

My brothers and sisters, on this Good Friday, we
know how deeply the Lord Jesus loves us:

page 5

Good Friday

A Christian missionary in India tells of the time he and a friend were travelling up a steep mountain on their way to a monastery. "We must hurry because darkness is falling," his friend cried out. "If the weather gets any worse we will soon freeze to death." Suddenly, they heard a cry for help. A few feet in front of them they saw the figure of someone lying in the snow. "We must help," the missionary said. "We cannot help or we will die," the friend replied.

The friend continued on while the missionary remained to help the person lying in the snow. "Even if I must die, I will die saving someone," the missionary said to himself. He then examined the victim. It was a man who had broken his leg and was powerless to move. The missionary made a sling out of his blanket and dragged the man along the snow, as though pulling a sled. Finally, he saw the lights of the monastery and, as he hastened toward safety, he stumbled over something hidden beneath the snow. It was the frozen body of his friend. The missionary, in saving another, had saved himself because the physical activity required to save the other had kept his blood circulating, giving him the strength he needed to keep moving.

My friends, each time in imitation of the Crucified Saviour, we stop along our way of the cross to help another, we save ourselves. Each act of service, each prayer of concern, each aspiration we utter for the world, every dream, vision, or hope we kindle in our hearts for hurting humanity and the coming of God's kingdom, -- keeps our spiritual blood circulating,

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Good Friday

_____ until we see the light of the Cross and hear those blessed words of the Saviour - "This day you shall be with me in paradise."

On this Good Friday, we know how deeply the Lord loves us:

In the days when he was in the flesh,
Christ offered prayers and supplications
with loud cries and tears to God, ...
Son though he was, he learned obedience
from what he suffered; and when perfected,
he became the source of eternal salvation
for all who obey him.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble//
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

HOLY SATURDAY AND EASTER SUNDAY

Reason #1 Why are we here ^{today?} ~~tonight~~? We gather to celebrate that most distinctive character of the Christian faith: the Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We are here as part of a historic community of believers ~~who~~ ^{to} affirm *with conviction*:

- 1. the fulfillment of biblical prophecy
- 2. the empty tomb
- 3. the testimony of apostolic witness
- 4. the victory of Jesus over death

"To him all the prophets testify... Acts 10:43

"Mary Magdalene saw that the stone had been rolled away" (John 20:2)

⊗ "...He is not here. He has been raised, exactly as he promised. Come and see the place where he was laid." (Matthew 28:6)

"Then the disciple who had arrived first at the tomb went in. He saw and he believed." (John 20:8)

"If we have died with Christ, we believe that we are also to live with him." (Romans 6: 9)

Reason #2 But we are also here ^{today} ~~tonight~~ because the Resurrection of Jesus responds to and even incites within the human spirit an inescapable search for the meaning of life. Deep down we sense that without Jesus' resurrection, there are no conclusive reasons to exist, to become, to hope, or even to ask such a fundamental question as, "What am I to do with my life?"

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Holy Saturday/Easter

The poet says it so beautifully ~~and his words ring so~~
~~true.~~

If Easter be not true,
Then all the lilies low must lie;
The Flanders' poppies fade and die;
The spring must lose her fairest bloom
For Christ were still within the tomb --

If Easter be not true.

If Easter be not true,
Then faith must mount on broken wing;
Then hope no more immortal spring;
Then love must lose her mighty urge;
Life prove a phnatom, death a dirge --

If Easter be not true.

If Easter be not true,
'Twere foolishness the cross to bear;
He died in vain who suffered there;
What matter though we laugh or cry,
Be good or evil, live or die,

If Easter be not true.

If Easter be not true -
But it is true, and Christ is risen!
And mortal spirit from its prison
Of son and death with Him may rise!
Worthwhile the struggle, sure the prize,

Since Easter, aye, is true!

Henry H. Barstow

page 3.

Holy Saturday/Easter

Reason #3

Finally, we are here ^{today} ~~tonight~~ because we have the gift of faith, the gift of faith. As ~~Christian faithful~~ ^{BELIEVER} we can say that this faith is radically structured into our very being.

Indeed, the Risen Lord is believable - ultimately - not because He makes sense, but because the very faith by which we believe is itself a gift from God. From this profound faith comes that sure hope that what the Lord promised shall truly happen. So, Saint Paul can exclaim:

Your life is hidden now with Christ in God.

When Christ our life appears, then you shall

appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4)

Sisters and Brothers, our life-long journey to die and rise with Christ shall be made more joyful this evening as we receive into full communion and baptize those seekers of the Way, the Truth, and the Life who find a home and spiritual nourishment among our community of disciples. We praise God for their presence among us.

Friends, on this Solemn Easter ^{Day} ~~Night~~, let us be the first to reach the empty tomb, the first to see the stone rolled back, the first to see the wrappings and the headband of glory, ~~the~~ ^{and the} first to fall to the ground in worship, ~~the~~ first to hear "He is risen." ~~and the first to proclaim,~~
"~~JESUS CHRIST IS LORD.~~"

page 3a

Holy Saturday/Easter Sunday

But let us also be the first to run from the tomb
into the world - into the world of violence and injustice,
into the world of hunger and disease, into the world of
injustice and ~~fe~~^{materialism}ar, into the world of loveless lives
and weary families.

Let us be the first to roll back the stones of
prejudice and discrimination, of insensitivity and mistrust,
of fear and ~~force~~^{infidelity}, and of all barriers to wholesome human
relationships.

Let us be the first to see the wrappings and headbands
of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, of love
and of peace.

Let us be the first to fall to the ground in worship
the One True God, and his Risen Son, Jesus Christ, and the
Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

On this Easter ^{0*1} Night, let us be the first to proclaim,
JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!!

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Holy Saturday/Easter

Let us now continue with the ^{Sacred Liturgy} ~~Night Watch~~ of the
Resurrection - ~~to the Rites of Baptism, Reception, Confirmation,~~
~~the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, and, yes,~~ the Lord's Supper.
May we proceed in this spirit:

My Risen Lord, I feel thy strong protection;
I see thee stand among the graves today;
I am the Way, the Life, the Resurrection,
I hear thee say,
And all the burdens I have carried sadly
Grow light as blossoms on an April day;
My cross becomes a staff, - I journey gladly
This Easter Day.

Palm Sunday of the Passion
of the Lord
Capilla de Cristo Rey
12 Noon
April 15, 1984

"HAVE THIS MIND IN YOU WHICH WAS ALSO IN CHRIST JESUS"

How often we think of someone we admire and say to ourselves, - I'd like to get inside that person, to learn what he or she is feeling, the person's attitudes and convictions, to ascertain what makes that person say the things he says, or do the things she does; to discern what or who motivates that person to choose one set of friends as opposed to another. In short, as human persons we constantly look for models - to find out the "me I should be." Indeed, "who am I" is not life's pressing question. Rather, "who or what type of person should I become" is life's most profound and urgent question.

My brothers and sisters, it is principally during these days of Holy Week, during this time in which the Church focuses on the suffering, dieing and rising of Jesus, that the answer to this basic human question is found.

"Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus" is the ancient response of an ancient Church to this perennial human question.

What, then, is the "mind of Christ"?

I. It is the mind of a suffering servant.

- one who speaks a word to the weary

page 2
Palm Sunday
Christo Rey

**Wednesday's reading*

-* one who listens to the Father,
even when his message is not immediately
understanding or pleasing

- one who suffers persecution for what is right

**Wednesday's reading*

-* one who relies on the Lord for guidance and help

II. It is the mind of one whose personal position is not
an end in itself but a means of life for others.

- one who constantly empties himself of his own
being so that others might grow

- one that becomes a slave, so that others might
be free

- one who trudged the path to calvary and ignominious
death, to bring salvation to others

Phillipians

III. What we learn from the Passion Narrative is that Jesus
made a conscious choice to suffer and die in obedience to the

Father's will —^{*} *in the face of Judas' betrayal and the cowardice of his
his disciples*

- so that the world might find life

- so that the world might understand the meaning of
human suffering

- so that the world might know that it is ultimately
directed towards eternity;

- so that the world might realize that only through
suffering is the kingdom of God accomplished;

- so that the world would understand that full and
final triumph comes in the resurrection

**Wednesday's
Gospel*

Passion

From the Passion of the Lord we learn that Jesus is
our Expiation
our Salvation
our Justification
our Reconciliation

This selfless, self-giving of Jesus is the described by an unknown poet who compares Jesus of Nazareth with Alexander the Great, who epitomizes the temptation of every person who seeks greatness and superiority in the wrong way.

This is the way the poet put it:

Jesus and Alexander died at 33;
One lived and died for self; the other for you and me,
The Greek died upon a throne, the Jew died upon a cross,
One's life a triumph seemed, the other's but a loss,
One walked with mighty men and the other walked alone,
One shed the whole world's blood, the other gave his own.

Jesus and Alexander died at 33,
The Greek died at Babylon, the Jew at Calvary,
One made himself god, but the one who was God made himself less,
One lived but to blast, the other but to bless,
When died the Greek, forever fell his throne of swords,
But Jesus died and arose to live forever,
King of King and Lord of Lords.

Today, let us acclaim the Saviour who came to save us.
Let us follow his example in our relationship to God, with eagerness to discern and do the Father's will. Let us follow his example in relationship to each other - "to serve and not to be served," to give our lives for each other.

Let us "have that mind which was also in Christ Jesus."

page 4
Christo Rey

For --

God highly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name
above every other name,
So that at Jesus' name
every knee must bend
in the heavens, on the earth,
and under the earth,
and every tongue proclaim
to the glory of God the Father:
JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!

Easter elicits faith...

Holy Thursday
April 18, 1984
The Church of Saint Mary,
Collinwood
Remarks

Father Tomc,
My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

The Holy Thursday Liturgy has always had a most special meaning for me ^{and my family} since my background is Protestant. For me and my family (all except my oldest brother were received into the Catholic Church later in life), the mystery of the Eucharist, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, remains the most precious gift of our Catholic Faith. In a sense, the Eucharist sums up what it means to be Catholic. When my family became Catholic, we knew that we had found a spiritual treasure that was never offered in our Baptist tradition.

I can still see my mother at the age of 55 making the 1st Holy Communion

Thus, my message to you this evening is: treasure this wonderful and mystery-filled gift of Eucharistic food. As one writer reminds us, the Eucharist was instituted within the context of a family meal, the Passover. A family eating together at the family table and partaking of the same food is a sign of unity. And so our unity with Christ is by its very nature a corporate reality, not an individual one only. It is impossible to come into union with Christ and through him with the Father without coming into union with other members of God's family. Such union must find its expression in charity. This is why at the Last Supper Jesus gave both an example and a command of love. His example of practical

Touch up

Treasure it, realize its meaning:

- 1) Reality*
- 2) Euchar. Sacrament*
- 3) New Lamb*
- 3) Passover #4*

Holy Thursday
April 18, 1984
Page 2

charity was one of service to the apostles: he washed their feet. His command was this: "I give you a new commandment: love one another; such as my love has been for you, so must your love be for each other" (John 13:34f)

My friends, as I now carry our Eucharistic Lord in procession for your veneration, may you renew your faith in this precious gift and may you be moved to sincere devotion. May you come to love each other and all of God's people more deeply: without striving for such universal love, we are unfaithful to the meaning of the Eucharist.--- Finally, I extend to you my wish for a fruitful and blessed commemoration of the suffering, dying, and rising of Jesus.

St. Rose Church
Good Friday
April 20, 1984
5:30 p.m.

Poets and preachers have often compared two dynamic young men who both died at age 33--Jesus of Nazareth and Alexander the Great. Alexander lived a privileged life. As a boy he was tutored personally by the immortal Aristotle. He was a man of great wealth and power. As a military conqueror, he was nearly invincible. Indeed, there came a time when Alexander wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. And yet he died a hopeless alcoholic at age 33.

One unknown poet put it this way:

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When died the Greek, forever fell his throne of swords,
But Jesus died and arose to live forever,
King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

My brothers and sisters, today we commemorate the passion and crucifixion of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Today the Church focuses its attention on that great display of love that was crowned with the Lord's triumphant Resurrection.

Christ spent his whole life, my friends, in absolute, total and unconditional self-giving. Christ healed, consoled, forgave, reconciled, suffered excruciating torture and died an abominable death. He experienced the mockings and scoffings of the crowd and the abandonment of his closest allies.

"He was spurned and avoided by men,
a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,
One of those from whom men hid their faces,
spurned, and we held him in no esteem. . .
He was pierced for our offenses,
crushed for our sins." (Isaiah 52:14-53:12)

Christ emptied himself and took the form of a slave in birth and in death. He was obedient to the Father - to the very end. Christ willingly gave his body to execution because, antecedently, he had already given his mind, heart, soul, and will in unconditional obedience to the Father. Christ was the Good Samaritan who took any risk to give life and hope to others.

In this self-offering, Christ suffered and died, not for himself, but for others. Indeed, this self-giving and service was the characteristic of his whole life. Jesus was the itinerant preacher and the bearer of good news: the one who walked with and among men and women of his day and time.

Jesus was there with the people, with the common poor people and the uncommon wealthy people.

He was there in the journey to Jerusalem, when the pains and needs, and hopes of others reached out to him.

He was there in the need for their baptism by John, in the joy of their marriages and feasts, in the grief of the death of a friend called Lazarus.

He was there in Gethsemani to discern the will of his Father and the terror of the crucifixion.

Jesus was and is - always - the man of service and self-giving for us.

My friends, where are we on the Way of the Cross? "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" Are we a Simon of Cyrene, who courageously stepped from the jeering crowds and help him carry the cross?

A Veronica, who compassionately wiped his face with the cloth, and later unfolded it to see its imprint?

A Dismas, the Good Thief, who uttered, "Father, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

A Mary Magdalen, Salome, Joanna, or Joses, brave women who attended to Jesus's needs and stayed with him to the end?

A Joseph of Arimethea, who faced cowardly and blind rulers, and asked for the Lord's body.

Yes, where are we on the Way of the Cross, as Jesus is crucified
anew

in the hopeless poverty and hunger of millions,
in the violence of war, revolution, terrorism, that
wrenches the sacred flesh of our brothers and
sisters around the world,
in unjust and exploitive economic systems that crush
the aspirations of the marginal and the poor,
in the senseless disregard for the unborn child
expressed in the violence of abortion,
in the insensitivity to the dignity and rights of
our elderly,
in the subjugation of family life to the miscon-
ceptions and distortions of TV soap operas, the
materialism and consumerism of contemporary society,
and a mentality that views children as burdens
and family time together as boredom.

Yes, where are we on the Way of the Cross as Jesus is crucified
anew?

Mary, His mother and ours, who stood beneath the
cross and, despite the deepest anguish, repeated those words
that Jesus's birth and now his death - "be it done unto me
according to your word." Do we stand with Mary at the foot
of the Cross?

My brothers and sisters, on this Good Friday, we
know how deeply the Lord Jesus loves us:

We have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God; let us hold fast to our profession of faith. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet never sinned. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and favor and to find help in time of need.

In the days when he was in the flesh, Christ offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to God, who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when perfected, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.--

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord.

Easter Sunday
Holy Rosary Church
April 22, 1984
10:00 a.m.

Holy Saturday
Nativity Church
April 21, 1984
6:30 p.m.

Introduction

1. unprecedented interest in religion in this decade: Gallup
2. personal experience: Lady in a cab
3. Plutarch tells the story of a man who attempted to make a dead body stand upright. He tried various schemes of balancing. He experimented with different postures. Finally, he gave up, saying, "There is something missing on the inside."

Body

Reason #1

Why are we here today? We gather to celebrate that most distinctive character of the Christian faith: the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We are here as part of a historic community of believers who affirm --

1. the fulfillment of biblical prophecy in Jesus the Lord:
"To him all the prophets testify, saying that everyone who believes in him has forgiveness of sins through his name."
(Acts 10:43)
2. the empty tomb:
"She (Mary Magdalene) saw that the stone had been rolled away."
(John 20: 2)
"...he is not here. He has been raised, exactly as he promised. Come and see the place where he was laid." (Matthew 28: 6)
3. the testimony of apostolic witness:
"Then the disciple who had arrived first at the tomb went in. He saw and he believed." (John 20: 8)

Reason #2

responds to and even
But we are also here because the Resurrection of Jesus/incites within the human spirit an inescapable search for the meaning of life. Deep down we sense that without Jesus' Resurrection and ours - as Plutarch tells us, -- "There is something missing on the inside." Like the Lady in the cab, we continually ask, "What am I to do with my life?"

The poet says it so beautifully and his words ring so truthfully:

If Easter be not true,
Then all the lilies low must lie;
The Flanders' poppies fade and die;
The spiring must lose her fairest bloom,
For Christ were still within the tomb --
If Easter be not true.

If Easter be not true,
Then faith must mount on broken wing;
Then hope no more immortal spring;
Then love must lose her mighty urge;
Life prove a phantom, death a dirge --
If Easter be not true.

If Easter be not true,
'Twere foolishness the cross to bear;
He died in vain who suffered there;
What matter though we laugh or cry,
Be good or evil, live or die,
If Easter be not true.

If Easter be not true -
But it is true, and Christ is risen!
And mortal spirit from its prison
Of sin and death with Him may rise!
Worthwhile the struggle, sure the prize,
Since Easter, aye, is true!

Henry H. Barstow

son #3

But we are also here today because we have the gift of faith, the gift of faith. As Christian faithful we can say that this faith is radically structured into our very being.

Indeed, the Risen Lord is believable not because He makes sense, but because the very faith by which we believe is itself a gift from God. From this profound faith comes that sure hope that what the Lord promises shall truly happen.

How well the apostle tells it:

Since you have been raised up in company with Christ,
set your heart on what pertains to higher realms,
where Christ is seated at God's right hand,
Be intent on things above rather than on things of earth.
After all, you have died! Your life is hidden now with Christ in God.
When Christ our life appears, then you shall appear with him in glory.

(Collosians 3: 1-4)

My sisters and Brothers in Christ, on this solemn Easter Night (Day), let us be the first to reach the empty tomb, the first to see the stone rolled back, the first to see the wrappings and the headband of glory, the first to fall to the ground in worship, the first to hear, "He is risen," and the first to proclaim, "JESUS CHRIST IS LORD."

As in every Eucharist, we celebrate the Passover of the Lord when we gather around the Eucharistic Table. As we do so on this Easter Night (Day), may we pray in this spirit:

My Risen Lord, I feel thy strong protection;
I see thee stand among the graves today;
I am the Way, the Life, the Resurrection,
I hear thee say,
And all the burdens I hve carried sadly
Grow light as blossoms on an April day;
My cross becomes a staff, I journey gladly
This Easter Day.

①: Easter:
This Far By Faith
John 20:1-9

1984

"All that death could do," remarked Peter Marshall, "it did to Jesus. Our Lord felt the chill of it: he died - alone. But he did for us what we are not able to do for our loved ones: He explored the basements of death to the very bottom - and came back to tell us to be of good cheer."

On this Easter Sunday morning, 1986, we are both privileged and full of hope because of the faith we profess.

I say "privileged" because we have learned from the shock and bewilderment of Mary Magdalene who was confronted by the open and empty tomb. Her search for the Risen Lord is now our search. God be praised! He has found us.

Privileged, for we have heard the cry of anguish of Mary, echoing out at us down the corridors of time, saying with compassion and urgency: "We don't know where they put him!" Today we seize upon this occasion to now place him back within the embrace of our lives.

I say privileged for our Lenten discipline and humble preparations for today allow us to understand the pain and tragedy of that Good Friday (as we sang "See How They Done My Lord") and shout out in joy and triumph "Can't No Grave Hold This Body Down!"

Moreover, we are full of hope this Easter day. For our faith assures us that "in every problem the Risen Christ is there to consult, in every effort he is there to help. In every sorrow he is there to comfort. On every road he is there to banish fear, and in the sunshine he is there to make joy doubly dear." (Wm Barclay) The excitement and hope of this day are those of Mary, Peter, John, and our own ancestors who summed it up so well: "My Lord, What a Morning!"

The sight of the empty tomb that morning could well have driven Mary, Peter and John to the brink of despair. It did not! In a like manner, it is not our personal experiences of each and every waking morning which give us

②

any cause for panic and despair. The enemy which shocks and bewilders us lies in the remorse for something that happened yesterday, and the dread of what tomorrow might disclose.

We might look back with remorse on black-self-hate; on envy and anger; on lust and marital infidelity; on materialism and consumerism. But where does this "remorse" take us? To an empty tomb filled now with just remorse.

We might even look ahead with dread at unemployment and poverty; at war and hunger; at racism here and apartheid abroad; at abortion of the yet-to-be born and rejection of "love children" who "happened" to be born; at the breakdown of our traditionally strong black family units and the loss of personal dignity to drugs and addictions. Where does this dread of tomorrow carry us? To an empty tomb - dark with dread.

Mary recognized that she could not face the question of the empty tomb by herself. She sought out Peter - just as we need to seek out the gifts, strengths, and inspired faith of one another.

Peter did not remain imprisoned in the tomb of his own personal cowardice and weakness after his denial of the Lord. He ran to seek the Risen Savior. And, in this gesture, acknowledged that discipleship must never be abandoned. Are we able to renew our faith in the Lord, allowing him to raise us up "as on eagle's wings," and minister to our brothers and sisters whom (at times) we have denied and abandoned?

John came to the tomb, moving quickly with all he had: love. It was this undying love that gave him the eyes to see and the mind to understand the signs of the wrappings and the cloth inside. And, because of this, he was able to lay hold of the one great truth and the ultimate meaning of the first Easter morning: Jesus had overcome the death of despair and opened for us the door of hope;

He had removed the death of fear and shown us the life of trust;
He had ended the death of hate and revealed to us the life of love;
He, the Lord, had triumphed over the death of war and guided us on the road to peace.

3

Let us be the first to run from the tomb this day -- into the world of violence and injustice, into the world of hunger and disease, into the world of loveless lives and weary families.

Let us be the first to roll back the stones of insensitivity and mistrust, of fear and infidelity, of all barriers to wholesome human relationships.

Let us be the first to see the wrappings of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, love and peace.

Let us be the first to fall to the ground in worship of the One True God, and his Risen Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

On this Easter morning, let us be the first to proclaim:

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD !