

PALM SUNDAY
23 MARCH 1986, 11 A.M.
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CHURCH

Is. 50: 4-7
PHIL. 2: 6-11
LUKE 22:14-23: 56

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS--TODAY WE BEGIN A GREAT JOURNEY. WE CELEBRATE YEARLY THE MYSTERY OF OUR SALVATION--A KIND OF SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE BACK TO THE ORIGIN OF OUR LIFE WITH GOD. WE LEAVE ASIDE OUR DAILY CONCERNS THIS WEEK, WE PAUSE ALONG LIFE'S JOURNEY A MOMENT, THIS WEEK--AND AS THE SONG GOES: "COME AWAY TO THE LAND OF FREEDOM"--WE ENTER THE HOLY CITY WITH SONGS OF FAITH: HOSANNAH!

OUR FIRST READING IS A KIND OF SONG OF FREEDOM. THE SERVANT SONG OF ISAIAH IS AN ANCIENT SLAVE-SONG, BORN IN SORROW AND OPPRESSION, BUT ALIVE IN THE DEEP SOULED DIGNITY OF A CHILD OF GOD SET FREE BY FAITH: "THE LORD GOD HAS GIVEN ME A WELL-TRAINED TONGUE, THAT I MIGHT KNOW HOW TO SPEAK TO THE WEARY A WORD THAT WILL ROUSE THEM." THE GOD OF FREEDOM SPEAKS TO THE OPPRESSED, SO THE SLAVE-SONG EXULTS: "AND I HAVE NOT REBELLED, HAVE NOT TURNED BACK!!! ...THE LORD GOD IS MY HELP, THEREFORE I AM NOT DISGRACED; I HAVE SET MY FACE LIKE FLINT, KNOWING THAT I SHALL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME!"

WE WILL HEAR A LOT OF THESE SLAVE-SONGS OF ISAIAH DURING THESE DAYS OF HOLY WEEK, AND OUR HEARTS, TOO, ECHO THEIR ANCIENT AND PROUD TRUTH: GOD INDEED HAS VISITED US WITH FREEDOM: WE SHALL OVERCOME!

OUR SECOND READING FROM PHILIPPIANS INTRODUCES OUR CHAMPION, JESUS CHRIST--WHO COMES TO SHARE OUR HUMAN LOT,

ENTERING INTO OUR BONDAGE TO SET US FREE. WE ARE SET FREE IN CHRIST BECAUSE HE SHARES OUR HUMAN ESTATE IN ALL ITS HUMBLEST FORMS. HE MOVES AMONG US AS A SLAVE, AND MAKES HIMSELF A BOND-SERVANT TO US ALL: "COME TO ME" HE SAYS IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL, "ALL YOU WHO ARE WEARY AND HEAVY-LADEN! TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU, FOR MY LOAD IS EASY AND MY BURDEN IS LIGHT! (CF. MATT. 11: 28-30)

*as one who
hunger for
justice, as
one rejected,
as one who
has no place
to lay his
head*

WE BEGIN HOLY WEEK THIS YEAR LISTENING TO THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE! NO--THIS IS MORE THAN LISTENING--FOR WE PARTICIPATE BY LISTENING, WE ENTER INTO THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY WITH ST. LUKE. IT IS EASY FOR US TO IDENTIFY WITH THE ARGUING DISCIPLES, THE FAITHLESS AND COWARDLY PETER. WE CAN SEE OUR PRIDE IN THE ENVIOUS SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, OUR GREED AND OUR LAZINESS--ALL THE FAULTS OF OUR SINFUL LIVES ARE UNMASKED IN THE STORY OF CHRIST'S LAST HOURS.

BUT THE WORD DOES NOT COME TO CONDEMN--NOR EVEN TO MAKE US FEEL BAD--FOR THIS IS A STORY NOT OF HUMAN TREACHERY, NOT A TALE OF OUR SINS, NOT EVEN AN EXHORTATION FOR US TO LIVE BETTER. WE ARE NOT THE MAIN ACTORS HERE: THIS IS THE STORY OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER/WHO MANIFESTS HIS ALL-CONQUERING MERCY/IN THE LOVING ACTS OF CHRIST.

THE PASSION STORY IS A LOVE STORY, A TENDER DEAR TALE OF CHRIST'S TRIUMPHANT LOVE. JESUS TAKES UP THE BREAD AND CUP OF OUR HUMANITY: THIS IS MY BODY! THIS IS THE CUP OF MY BLOOD POURED OUT! HERE IS MY LIFE IN YOUR MIDST, POURED OUT IN PAIN AND LOVE, HANDED OVER IN

ENDLESS COMPASSION. IN THE MIDST OF BITTER ARGUMENT
--THE PRAYER OF CHRIST PROMISES HARMONY AND HEALING.
TO COWARDLY AND FAITHLESS PETER, HE PROMISES FORGIVENESS
AND NEW STRENGTH. TO THE THIEF DYING ON THE CROSS, HE
PROMISES ETERNAL LIFE!

IN ALL OUR SORROWS, IN EACH FAILURE, THROUGH
EVERY LOSS--EVEN TO THE TOMB ITSELF! JESUS SAYS: I AM
WITH YOU, AS A YOKE, AS A BOND--AND YOU ARE WITH ME. MY
CROSS IS YOURS, BUT YOURS IS ALWAYS MINE--AND THE DEATH
I BEAR IN THE FLESH IS MY LIFE-GIVING BOND TO YOU.
OUR PRAYERS, OUR LOVE, OUR LIFE ITSELF--IS ONE! *with Christ,*

SO THE WORD OF THIS OLD SLAVE SONG SPEAKS
IN OUR HEARTS TODAY. WITH PETER, WE SEE THE LORD LOOKING
AT US WITH INFINITE FORGIVENESS AND COMPASSION, AND WITH
PETER WE REMEMBER HIS WORD. WITH THE THIEF WE HEAR THAT
PROMISE ALWAYS, AND WITH MARY WE TREASURE THE SONG IN
OUR HEARTS: COME AWAY TO THE LAND OF FREEDOM. WE SHALL
OVERCOME.

HOLY THURSDAY
27 MARCH 1986, 8 P.M.
ST. MARK CHURCH

Ex. 12: 1-8, 11-14
I Cor. 11: 23-26
JOHN 13: 1-15

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS--WE CONTINUE OUR JOURNEY WITH CHRIST THIS HOLY EVENING. WE CELEBRATE THE GREAT MYSTERY OF OUR FAITH: HIS SACRAMENTAL PRESENCE WITH US IN OUR CONTINUAL JOURNEY WITH ALL THE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY, THE CHURCH, AND WITH ALL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE, AS MANY AS THE LORD OUR GOD SHALL CALL TO HIMSELF.

TONIGHT OUR SAVIOR ARISES FROM THE TABLE, AND KNEELS BEFORE THE POOR TO WELCOME THEM TO THE BANQUET OF ETERNAL LIFE. THE WATER JARS THAT WERE FIRST Poured OUT BY SLAVES AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS LIFE AMONG US AT THE WEDDING FEAST OF CANA, ARE NOW Poured OUT FREELY BY THE ONE WHO BINDS HIMSELF TO US AND US TO HIM WITH LOVE: "WHAT I JUST DID WAS GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE: AS I HAVE DONE, SO MUST YOU DO."

SO WE CELEBRATE THIS MEMORIAL FEAST WITH PILGRIMAGE TO THE LORD, THIS PILGRIMS' FEAST. HAVE WALKING STAFFS IN YOUR HANDS AND SANDALS ON YOUR FEET, OUR FIRST READING SAYS--BE PREPARED FOR A JOURNEY, TO BE LED FORTH FROM THE LAND OF BONDAGE BOUND IN FAITH FOR FREEDOM. TAKE NOTHING FOR YOUR JOURNEY, JESUS WILL TELL US, FOR THE JOURNEY BY FAITH MUST NOT BE ENCUMBERED BY ANY OTHER CARE, AND SELFISH CONCERN OR COWARDLY FEAR. FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY IS THE BODY OF CHRIST. DRINK FOR THE WAY IS HIS PRECIOUS BLOOD.

THE TRAVELLING BREAD--IS BREAD BEGGED, BREAD

PRAYED FOR, HUMBLE BREAD. THIS BREAD IS: NEEDS WE REVEAL TO ONE ANOTHER IN HUMBLE VULNERABILITY. THIS IS THE BODY OF THE LORD, HIS FLESH FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD. "IS NOT THE BREAD WE BREAK A COMMON BOND IN THE BODY OF THE LORD?" ST. PAUL ASKS US IN THE EPISTLE FROM WHICH WE READ THIS EVENING; AND "THE CUP OF BLESSING WE BLESS, IS IT NOT A COMMON BOND IN THE BLOOD OF CHRIST?"

YES, TONIGHT WE RECEIVE WHAT WAS PASSED ON TO US. WE ARE DEPENDENT UPON ONE ANOTHER IN THE BODY WE SHARE, THE LIFE OF THE WORLD WE COMMUNICATE TO EACH OTHER, JOINED IN ONE BODY WHICH KNOWS NO DISCRIMINATION, BUT WHERE THE LESSER IS HONORED AS THE GREATER, WHERE CHRIST IS ONE IN ALL.

YES, TONIGHT WE DEPEND UPON TRAVELLING BREAD-- TAKING NOTHING FOR OUR JOURNEY, EXCEPT THE LIFE OF FAITH WHICH JOINS US, MAKING US DEPENDENT UPON ONE ANOTHER IN THE BONDS OF CHRIST'S OWN LOVE OUTPOURED.

THE CUP WE BLESS IS THE COST OF SUCH UNION, THE BOND OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, HIS LIFE-GIVING SUFFERING IN COMPASSION AND LOVE: THIS IS THE BOND WHICH GIVES LIFE TO THE BODY AND BRINGS ALL THE MEMBERS INTO ONE WITH THE CRUCIFIED LORD: "EVERY TIME, THEN, YOU EAT THIS BREAD AND DRINK THIS CUP, YOU PROCLAIM THE DEATH OF THE LORD UNTIL HE COMES!"

WE ARE A PEOPLE OF THE JOURNEY, FOR WE DEFINE OURSELVES NOT BY ANY NATION, ANY ANCESTRY, ANY CULTURE, NOR BY ANY PLACE. LIKE OUR LORD, WE ARE KNOWN BY THE

JOURNEY WE MAKE. SO JESUS TONIGHT BEGINS THIS JOURNEY "FULLY AWARE THAT HE HAD COME FROM GOD AND WAS GOING TO GOD."

JESUS RISES FROM THE TABLE. HE SETS ASIDE HIS CLOTHES. HE GIRDS HIMSELF AROUND. HE POURS WATER INTO THE BASIN. WHAT A JOURNEY! IS THIS THE FOUNTAINS OF LIVING WATER HE PROMISED HIS DISCIPLES? PETER IS SHOCKED AND ANGRY: NEVER WILL YOU WASH MY FEET! NOTHING IS CHANGED. DAYDREAMING ABOUT POWER AND GLORY EXPLODES AND DREAMERS ARE DISAPPOINTED. "IF I DO NOT WASH YOU, YOU WILL HAVE NO PART WITH ME!"

THE LIFE-GIVING BOND IS A MATTER OF WATER-- BUT WATER POURED OUT, WATER FOR CLEANSING. FAITH, FOR THE JOURNEY. BOUND TO THE LORD MEANS FAITH FOR THE CLEANSING, FAITH IN THE NEED TO BE CLEANSED. "IF I WASH YOUR FEET--I WHO AM TEACHER AND LORD--SO YOU MUST WASH EACH OTHER'S FEET. YOU MUST BE READY TO BE WASHED AND CLEANSED BY WATER AND THE WORD, SUBMITTING TO THE HUMBLE SERVICES OF OTHERS, SUBMITTING TO THE NEED TO BE TAUGHT AND TO BE LEAD. JUST AS THE MASTER SUBMITTED TO JOHN IN THE JORDAN, BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD. SO MUST WE BE READY--NOT TO REMOVE THE SPECK FROM THE EYES OF OTHERS BUT THE STONES IN OUR OWN HEARTS: TO BE WASHED AND TO POUR OUT THE LIFE-GIVING WATER OF SERVICE IN LOVE.

WATER THAT LIVES IS THE WATER THAT CLEANSSES: WE ENTER DEEPLY INTO THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST WHEN WE PERMIT OURSELVES TO BE CLEANSED--TO BE SCOURED OF OUR PREJUDICES,

HOLY THURSDAY P. 4

ANGERS AND FEARS. WE OURSELVES TAKE UP THE BASIN TO
CLEANSE WITH WATERS OF TRUE REPENTANCE THE FEET OF OUR
BROTHERS AND SISTERS SOILED WITH THE ANXIETIES OF
OPPRESSION, THE ANGUISH OF INJUSTICE AND SELF-RIGHTEOUS
JUDGMENT. SO THE TOLERANCE TAUGHT BY SERVICE AND
SOLIDARITY MAKES READY THE BANQUET OF GOD'S LOVE, AND
LAYS THE TABLE FOR THE BREAD OF OUR JOURNEY, THE CUP
OF OUR HOPE AND JOY.

GOOD FRIDAY

LEE BAPTIST CHURCH

28 MARCH 1986 -NOON-

"CALVARY, MOCKING AND THE
MOTHER OF JESUS..."

WE HAVE REACHED THE MOUNTAIN TOP AND WE SEE
OUR SAVIOR EXECUTED: JESUS, THE POOR MAN, RICH IN GOD.
JESUS, THE HUMBLE AND SIMPLE MAN, FILLED WITH GOD'S
WISDOM, JESUS, OBEDIENT AND SERVANT OF ALL, POWERFUL
HEALER AND LIBERATOR. JESUS CRUCIFIED!

THE WORLD IS NOT SILENT. POWER THAT COMES
FROM AVARICE AND SELFISHNESS AND GREED, THE FORCES OF
SELF-INDULGENCE AND PRIDE--ARE NOT SILENT. ILLUSIONS
ARE ALWAYS NOISY WHERE TRUTH IS USUALLY SILENT. THE
WEAKNESS OF NON-RESISTENCE IS MOCKED BY THE POWER OF
VIOLENCE. THE FRAGILITY OF LIFE IS MOCKED BY THE FINALITY
OF DEATH. THE LONELINESS OF HONESTY IS MOCKED BY THE
GABBLE OF THE LIARS. WEAKNESS APPEARS ALWAYS ALONE AND
VOICELESS WHILE VIOLENCE IS NOISY AND PROLIFERATE. THE
LORD OUR GOD IS SIMPLE AND ONE--BUT THE DEMON WHO STEALS
WHAT HE POSSESSES, CALLS HIS NAME "LEGION"--FOR, HE
SAYS, "WE ARE MANY!"

MOCKERY IS LOUD, PLENTIFUL, BOISTEROUS AND
BULLYING BY SHEER FORCE AND WEIGHT OF NUMBERS AND VOLUME,
SHEER INERTIA AND BRUTE IMPENETRABILITY. MOCKERY ALWAYS
WINS THE BATTLE OF APPEARANCES, FOR IT CLOAKS ITSELF WITH
EXTERNAL SHOW, MAKING UP WITH THEATRICALS WHAT IT CAN NEVER
HAVE IN SUBSTANCE ON ACCOUNT OF ITS MEANNESS OF SPIRIT
AND LACK OF SOUL.

MOCKERY WINS CONVERTS QUICKLY FOR ITS DEMANDS

ARE FEW, AND IT PROMISES REWARDS THAT ARE INSTANT AND EASY. JOIN THE CROUD! FOLLOW THE MOB! BELONG TO THE IN-GROUP! BE A BELONGER! WHAT YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND, RIDICULE, AND YOU WILL HAVE THE APPEARANCE OF BEING SMARTER THAN THE FOOLS WHO MUST STAND ALONE AND VULNERABLE FOR THE TRUTHS THEY DIE FOR.

THE SILENCE OF JESUS SUFFERS ON IN THE QUIET PAIN OF THE OPPRESSED, THE ALONE, THE ABANDONED, THE POWERLESS! SO WE COME TO THE CROSS, SO WE DRAW NEAR TO THE WOUNDS OF CHRIST MANIFEST TO US. SO WE STAND VULNERABLE IN THE COMMON BOND, AND SOLIDARITY WE HAVE WITH CHRIST'S CRUCIFIED BODY IN THE WORLD.

WE SEE MARY, THE WOMAN AMONG THE SILENT WOMEN STANDING IN FAITHFUL AGONY SO NEAR TO HER SON. NO ONE COULD EVER KNOW THE CROSS AS SHE DID, FOR WHO ELSE COULD EVER KNOW ITS PAIN MORE THAN SHE? SHE WHO FIRST SUBMITTED TO THE WORD MADE FLESH, NOW AT THE LAST IS THE LAST TO GRASP ITS DEAREST DEMAND OF HER ALL. MARY STANDS--AMONG ALL THE WOMEN--SOLID WITH HER SON, SOLID WITH THE WOMEN.

THE SILENCE IS BROKEN! "BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER!" THE WORD MADE FLESH HUMBLE TO THE END, CONFESSES HIS DEEPEST DEPENDENCE. "UNLESS A MAN IS BORN AGAIN..." THE SON OF MAN IS BORN AGAIN. THE SON OF GOD IS BORN OF WOMAN--FROM FIRST TO LAST--. THE SON OF GOD IS FROM FIRST TO LAST DEPENDENT UPON THE HUMAN CONDITION, ALWAYS "OF-A-MOTHER", ALWAYS DEPENDENT, ALWAYS A CHILD, LITTLE, THE

LEAST AMONG THE LEAST, HUNGERING AND THIRSTING FOR THE VERY LAST OF GOD'S WISDOM, FROM CONCEPTION AND BIRTH, TO DEATH, FROM BETHLEHEM AND NAZARETH TO JERUSALEM AND CALVARY, FROM FIRST TO LAST.

"BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER!" LEARN OF MARY, DO NOT BE AFRAID TO BE SUBJECT, TO BE SUBORDINATE, TO BE LEARNERS, LISTENERS--DO NOT BE AFRAID TO SUFFER, DO NOT FEAR TO BE SILENT, TO BE ALONE. DO NOT FEAR THE MOCKING CROUD.

FOR YOU ARE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR! STAND TALL FOR JUSTICE, SPEAK OUT FOR PEACE! WALK SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE OPPRESSED, BEAR THE BURDENS OF THE OSTRACIZED AND THE REJECTED. FOR WHEN YOU ARE MOST ALONE, YOU ARE LEAST ALONE--OH BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF MINE--CHILDREN OF MY HEAVENLY FATHER, MOTHERED EVER, MOTHERED STILL, WITH MARY, BY MARY'S SIDE, IN HER COMPANY, LOCKED IN HER HEART, SET FREE IN HER SILENT, CONSTANT, ARDENT PRAYER!

GOOD FRIDAY HOMILY
ST. HENRY CHURCH
28 MARCH 1986, 3 P.M.

Is. 52: 13-53: 12
HEB. 4: 14-16; 5:7-9.
JOHN 18:1-19: 42.

"WHO DO YOU WANT?" JESUS ASKS THIS QUESTION TODAY IN THE GARDEN BEFORE A MOB OF VIOLENT MEN. JESUS ASKS THE SAME QUESTION --THE VERY FIRST WORDS HE SPEAKS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL TO THE FOLLOWERS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST: "WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FOR? WHAT DO YOU WANT?" "TEACHER," ANDREW AND THE OTHER DISCIPLE ASKED, "WHERE DO YOU LIVE?" JESUS REPLIED: "COME AND SEE"--AND THE JOURNEY BEGAN....

NOW THE JOURNEY COMES TO AN EARTHLY END, AND THE QUESTIONS ARE DEFEATED BY THE VIOLENCE OF THOSE WHO ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR ANSWERS BUT NEVER FOR THE TRUTH. THE ANSWERS WHICH SATISFY ANCIENT PREJUDICES AND CONFIRM OLD AND TIRED FEARS AND JEALOUSIES--BUT NEVER THE WORDS THAT SET FREE, FREE FOR GIVING, FREE FOR TRUSTING, FREE FOR LOVE.

"I AM HE!" JESUS ANSWERS IN HUMBLE SUBMISSION TO HIS FATHER'S COMMAND THAT HE LOSE NOTHING OF THOSE GIVEN TO HIM. IN HUMBLE TRUST IN HIS FATHER, JESUS SAYS: "IF I AM THE ONE YOU SEEK--THEN LET THESE OTHERS GO!"

JESUS LETS US ALL GO--JESUS RELEASES US FROM THE ANGER AND VIOLENCE OF PRESENT AND IMMEDIATE RETRIBUTION, QUICK ANSWERS AND ABSOLUTE JUDGMENT--THE SHEPHERD IS STRUCK AND THE SHEEP ARE SCATTERED. TRUTH IS THE SURE JOURNEY YET TO BE TAKEN, THE DREAM DEFERRED, THE TASK YET TO BE DONE, THE TREASURE SOUGHT BUT NOT YET FOUND. THERE ARE OTHER TIMES, OTHER DAYS, OTHER GRACES--YET TO BE DONE!

THE HUMBLE JESUS LETS GO! "I WILL SEND ANOTHER HELPER, WHO SHALL LEAD YOU INTO ALL TRUTH!"

SO JESUS SUBMITS TO VIOLENCE, AND SEES HIS PEACABLE KINGDOM SLIP THROUGH HIS FINGERS AND VANISH AWAY IN FEAR, COWARDICE AND BETRAYAL--GLORIOUS FAILURE! HE DOES NOT RESIST THE SOLDIER'S SLAP, THE INSULT OF ENDLESS, UNCOMPREHENDING QUESTIONS--"SO THEN YOU ARE A KING??"

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR ME, THEN, LET THESE OTHERS GO--JESUS SAID. BUT ARE THEY EVER LOOKING FOR JESUS? PILATE ASKS "DO YOU WANT YOUR KING?" NO--WE WANT BARABBAS, THE KILLER AND THIEF! JESUS, BEATEN AND CROWNED--IS OFFERED AGAIN AND AGAIN: "BEHOLD THE MAN! WHAT SHALL I DO WITH YOUR KING?"

ALL POWER HAS BEEN GIVEN TO HIM, JESUS SAYS, TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE AND TO TAKE IT UP AGAIN. PILATE ASKS: "DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT I HAVE THE POWER TO RELEASE YOU AND THE POWER TO CRUCIFY YOU?"

WHAT POWER DOES PILATE HAVE? BY VIRTUE OF THE VIOLENT MEN AROUND HIM, PILATE ACTS--THE MAN OF ARROGANCE IS THE SLAVE OF ARROGANT DEMANDS--"IF YOU LET THIS MAN GO, YOU ARE NO FRIEND OF CAESAR!" WE HAVE NO KING BUT CAESAR....

SO VIOLENCE RULES, AND IT IS THE HOUR OF DARKNESS. THE KING IS RAISED UP, STRIPPED AND DIVIDED--HE WHO WAS BORN OF A WOMAN, BORN UNDER THE LAW, NOW IS BORN OF OBEDIENT LOVE--LOVING THOSE HE WAS SENT TO, FAITHFUL TO THE END. BORN OF WOMAN, HE IS BORN OF US ALL IN THE END--

--OUT OF THE WOMB OF ALL INJUSTICE, ALL VIOLENCE, ALL GREED--ALL THE POWERS OF SINFUL MAN--THE SINLESS ONE IS BORN THE RISEN LORD.

FAITH IS BORN AMONG THE WOMEN--AND THE LAST WORDS OF THE CROSS GIVE US ALWAYS THE MOTHER IN WHOSE WOMB EVERLASTING LIFE WAS BORN. LIFE ETERNALLY BORN IS SUBJECT ALWAYS TO MOTHER--MUST ALWAYS BE SUBJECT TO THE NURTURING OF PRAYER, MUST ALWAYS BE SUSTAINED AND FED BY THE WORD TREASURED, BROKEN, PASSED ON. SON BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER. MOTHER THERE IS YOUR SON...

LOVE THIRST UNTIL THE END--AND IN THE END, FAITH IS BORN FROM THE BLOOD AND THE WATER. NEW LIFE FLOWS FREELY FROM HIS SIDE AND NEW BIRTH OF FAITH IS BORN. FAITH LIVES! BORN OF BLOOD AND WATER, HANDED OVER IN THE SPIRIT, FAITH LIVES! TREASURED AMONG THE PRAYERFUL WOMEN, FED UPON THE WORD CHERISHED, HANDED OVER AND LAID WITHIN THE COLD TOMBS OF HUMAN HEARTS, OVER AND OVER AGAIN, IN EVERY GENERATION. THEY LOOK UPON HIM WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED, IN THE GARDEN WHERE IT ALL BEGAN.....

HOLY SATURDAY
29 MARCH 1986, 7:00 P.M.

Sf. Patrick, Breog

LUKE 24: 1-12

THIS IS THE NIGHT WE WAIT UPON THE LORD.
LIKE CHILDREN WE GATHER AROUND THE FIRE NEW-STRUCK
AGAINST THE NIGHT. WE KINDLE FAITH ANEW FROM THIS FIRE,
AND LISTEN IN WONDER TO MARVEL UPON MARVEL OF GOD'S LOVE.
REJOICE, HEAVENLY POWERS! SING, CHOIRS OF ANGELS! EXULT,
ALL CREATION AROUND GOD'S THRONE. THIS IS THE NIGHT WHEN
JESUS CHRIST BROKE THE CHAINS OF DEATH AND ROSE TRIUMPHANT
FROM THE GRAVE.

LET THERE BE LIGHT--AND LIGHT WAS MADE! THE
PEOPLE WHO WALKED IN DARKNESS NOW REJOICE IN THE GREAT
LIGHT! YOU SAVE YOUR PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS. YOU LEAD
US OUT OF OUR SLAVERY INTO THE LIGHT OF FREEDOM. OUR OLD
SELF IS DEAD--THE BODY OF OUR SIN--OUR INJUSTICE, OUR
PRIDE, OUR SELFISHNESS, ALL OUR FEARS AND THE VIOLENCE
BORN IN THE HEART--HAS ALL BEEN DESTROYED BY THE ONE
WHO DIED FOR US THAT WE MIGHT BE THE SLAVES OF SIN NO
LONGER.

ST. LUKE TELLS THE FIRST STORY OF THE RESURRECTION
THAT WE HEAR. HE HAS NO GLORIOUS LORD IN THIS FIRST
STORY--BUT WOMEN COMING TO MOURN AND TO HONOR THE DEAD
WITH LOVING SERVICES.

WOMEN SERVE THE DEAD BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE
IN LIFE EVEN WHEN DESTROYED BY VIOLENCE AND HATE. WOMEN
ARE FIRST AT THE TOMB BECAUSE THEY ARE FIRST AT THE CRIB:
BRINGING LIFE FORTH WITH GROANS AND TEARS--NOW BRINGING

FORTH FAITH IN LIFE, WITH SPICES PREPARED, AND TEARS.

MEN IN DAZZLING GARMENTS TERRIFY--IN THE EMPTY TOMB OF THEIR SORROW. WHY DO YOU SEARCH FOR LIFE AMONG THE DEAD? REMEMBER THE WORD HE SPOKE! HE HAD TO FALL INTO THE HANDS OF SINFUL MEN--HE HAD TO DIE! ON THE THIRD DAY HE WOULD RISE AGAIN!

THE WOMEN TELL THE STORY. HE IS NOT HERE; HE HAS BEEN RAISED UP! SORROW WITH NO MEMORY CANNOT BELIEVE. LOSS WITHOUT FAITH IS DEATH INDEED!

SO LUKE BEGINS THE STORY--WITH THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB AND WITH THE FIRST REJECTION: FOR ONLY THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN LIFE CAN RECEIVE THE WORD OF PROMISE AND CAN STOOP DOWN TO SEE NOTHING BUT WRAPPINGS AND READ THE SIGN OF THE EMPTY TOMB.

THE SOBER TRUTH BEGINS--THE STORY OF OUR RESURRECTION WITH THE LORD OFTEN BEGINS IN THE EMPTINESS OF DEATH, THE DISARRAY OF DISCARDED WRAPPINGS OF TREASURES LOST. THE PAIN OF DISPLACEMENT IS REAL, AND IN THE CONFUSION AND LOSS, MEMORY IS BORN. CHRIST HAS SUFFERED, CHRIST HAS DIED.

THE PILGRIM TO THE TOMB COMES TO MOURN, COMES WITH LIFE, BECAUSE ONLY THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN LIFE HAVE COURAGE TO MOURN, AND NOT TO DESPAIR.

THE WORD REMEMBERED TELLS THE MOURNER: HE IS NOT HERE--HE IS RISEN! GO FORTH IN THE NEW TRUTH AND SEEK LIFE AMONG THE LIVING! CARRY THE WORD OF HOPE TO

HOLY SATURDAY P. 3

A PEOPLE LONGING TO BE SET FREE, ENTOMBED IN ANGER
AND VIOLENCE AND HATRED, DEAD IN THEIR SINS. CHRIST
IS RISEN!

So, DEAREST BROTHERS AND SISTERS, STRENGTHENED
IN THIS SOBER SORROW BY THIS WORD OF FAITH--WE RECEIVE
THE NEWS OF OUR DELIVERANCE ANEW AND RENEW OUR BAPTISMAL
PROMISES AND PLEDGE AGAIN THE BOND OF ETERNAL LIFE WE
WERE GIVEN WITH OUR RISEN LORD! WE ARE BORN ANEW IN THE
LORD WHO DIED. WE EAT AND DRINK WITH THE ONE WHO ROSE
AGAIN IN OUR WORLD AND IN OUR HEARTS!

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AGAIN IN OUR WORLD AND IN OUR HEARTS!

EASTER SUNDAY
30 MARCH 1986; 11:30 A.M.
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

ACTS 10: 34, 37-43
COL. 3: 1-4
JOHN 20: 1-9

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS--CHRIST IS RISEN!
EASTER GIVES US THIS JOYFUL GREETING! WE COME TO CHURCH ALL
IN NEW CLOTHES, BECAUSE WE CELEBRATE NEW LIFE, NEW
BEGINNINGS! THE LONG WINTER OF SORROW AND DECAY IS OVER--
WE BELIEVE IN SPRINGTIME, IN THE FLOWERS AND IN THE TREES
SO GREEN, IN THE WARM SUN!

EASTER BEGINS WITH STORIES REMEMBERED OF
SORROW LIVED THROUGH, OF DEATH ENDURED. BUT WE WITNESS
TO THE TRUTH OF FAITH: CHRIST LIVES! AND SO DO WE!
THE WORD OF GOD WE READ TODAY--IT IS IMPORTANT TO REALIZE--
IS HUMAN: A COLLECTION OF HUMAN MEMORIES DIVINELY INSPIRED.
THE WORD AND THE WITNESS OF THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS SEE
WITH THE EYES OF THE HEART: THEY BELIEVE AND LAID DOWN
THEIR LIVES IN JOYFUL AND FAITHFUL WITNESS. WORDS HERE
SPOKEN TODAY ARE NOT CHEAP--THEY ARE BOUGHT AND WRITTEN
WITH BLOOD AND IN LOVE.

SO THIS DAY WE TOO MUST DIE TO DISBELIEF AND
BE PREPARED TO LIVE A NEW LIFE, HIDDEN IN CHRIST WHO
LIVES WITH GOD. WE MUST SET ASIDE ALL OUR OLD WAYS OF
SELF-CENTERED GREED, OF ANGER AND VIOLENCE, DISOBEDIENCE
AND DISRESPECT. THESE WAYS MUST DIE! WE MUST BE BORN
AGAIN IN SINCERE TRUTH, BURYING OUR LIFE IN CHRIST WHO
RISES IN OUR HEARTS, AND IN OUR WORDS AND DEEDS.

CHRIST IS OFTEN BORN IN SORROW AND IN CONFUSION.
MARY MAGDALENE GREETES THE RESURRECTION WITH TEARS AND

ANGUISH: "THEY HAVE TAKEN THE LORD AWAY, AND WE DO NOT KNOW WHERE THEY HAVE LAID HIM!"

"THEY!" THE TERROR OF THE UNKNOWN ENEMY-- DON'T WE KNOW THIS IN OUR ANGER AND FRUSTRATION WITH THE SYSTEMIC EVILS OF THE WORLD, THE FACELESS EVILS WHICH IMPERSONALLY STRIP US OF OUR DIGNITY, WORKING INJUSTICE AND OPPRESSION, LAWS THAT ARE UNFAIR, JOBS THAT GO ONLY TO A FEW SELECT MEN WHO HAVE THE RIGHT *ethnic origin, social class, sex, physical & mental ability*, COLOR SKIN, ^AOR POLITICAL ALLEGIANCE, THE WORK SITUATION WHICH REWARDS FAMILY NEGLECT OR PENALIZES HONESTY. "THEY HAVE TAKEN THE LORD AWAY, AND WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY HAVE LAID HIM!"

WITH PETER AND THE OTHER DISCIPLE, WE RUN TO THE TOMB. WE DO NOT GIVE UP IN THE SORROW OF LOSS, OR THE FAILURE OF OUR OWN COWARDLY DENIAL OF THE LORD. IT TAKES FAITH WHEN EVERYONE ELSE IS IN DESPAIR, AND HAS GIVEN UP. IT IS GOOD TO GO TO THE TOMB--FOR WE SHOULD FACE THE SINS WE HAVE COMMITTED, THE FAILURES WE HAVE DONE, OUR WRONGS, OUR ENDLESS WRONGS.

THERE ARE NO ANGELS HERE IN JOHN'S STORY, NO WORD OF COMFORT OR OF HOPE, JUST AN EMPTY TOMB AND BLOODIED CLOTHS... THE HUMBLE FAITH OF SIMON PETER AND THE DISCIPLE JESUS LOVED--MOVES THEM TO HEAR THE ANGUISHED CRY OF MARY, AND HURRY TO JOIN IN HER SEARCH THROUGH THE SORROW OF THE TOMB. JUST AS JESUS HIMSELF ONCE WENT TO LAZARUS DEAD FOUR DAYS--IN TEARS AND IN LOVE--SO NOW THE

DISCIPLES RUN TO THE EMPTY TOMB. EVEN THOUGH THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND, THEY RECEIVE THE DISCARDED SIGNS OF DEATH, AND BELIEVE IN THE LORD THEY SEEK WITHIN THE EMPTY TOMB.

WE SHOULD NEVER BE FRIGHTENED BY THE EMPTY TOMB, NOR THE SORROW WE ENDURE IN ALL OUR LOSS--CHRIST IS RISE^ND IS THE WORD WE SEEK AND THE SONG WE HEAR.

DEAREST BROTHERS AND SISTERS--WE HEAR THIS WORD OF FAITH TODAY IN THE LORD WE DO NOT SEE. WE ARE STRENGTHENED BY THIS WORD--AND RECEIVE THE NEWS OF OUR DELIVERANCE WITH JOY. WE RENEW OUR BAPTISMAL PROMISES AND PLEDGE AGAIN THE BOND OF ETERNAL LIFE WE WERE GIVEN WITH OUR RISEN LORD AND WITH EACH OTHER. WE ARE BORN AGAIN IN THE LORD WHO DIED. WE EAT AND DRINK WITH THE ONE WHO ROSE AGAIN IN OUR WORDL AND IN OUR HEARTS!

*Palm Sunday
Saint Emeric Church
April 12, 1987
Homily after Blessing of Palms
taken from a sermon by
Saint Andrew of Crete, bishop
as found in the Liturgy of the Hours,
page 419 (* = quote begins)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We have just heard the Gospel of the Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

**So let us spread before his feet, not garments or soul-less olive branches, which delight the eye for a few hours and then wither, but ourselves, clothed in his grace, or rather, clothed completely in him.*

We who have been baptized into Christ must ourselves be garments that we spread before him.

Now that the crimson stains of our sins have been washed away in the saving waters of baptism and we have become white as pure wool, let us present the conquerer of death, not with mere branches of palms but with the real rewards of his victory.

Let our souls take the place of the welcoming branches as we join today in the children's holy song:

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the King of Israel!

SAINT EMERIC CHURCH
PALM SUNDAY
April 12, 1987

My Beloved Hungarian Brothers + Sisters in Christ,

"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, dying 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

2.

- one who listens to the Father,
even when his message is not immediately
understanding or pleasing
- one who suffers persecution for what is right
- 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

Philippians

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 --

- 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

Passion

3
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."

INSERT:

With Saint Emeric, the patron saint of this Parish and with the other Hungarian saints, we ask that...

4
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!

END

Holy Thursday

16 April 1987

Saint Wendelin Church

"Do this in memory of me!"

Today we celebrate the beginning of the Christian Passover. We remember in a very special way the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "This day shall be a memorial feast for you, which all your generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the Lord, as a perpetual institution ." (Exodus 12:14)-
-so our first reading concludes. So our ancestors, the Chosen People, remembered, and remember still to this very day, the mighty deeds of God. "He is your praise and He is your God, who has done these great and awesome things for you which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy people in all, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven." (Deut. 10: 21-22)

HOLY THURSDAY -- p2

So our ancestors remembered, and so we too remember our salvation at the hand of God--by the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of the Hebrew children, and by the blood of the Lamb of God offered up--as an everlasting memorial and a perfect sacrifice of praise--for all God's people. So we remember and so we are saved.

Our memory is marked with blood-to teach us how great is the cost of our life:

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you," St. Paul cries out, "whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought at a price: therefore glorify God in your body!" (i Cor. 6: 19-20)

HOLY THURSDAY -- p3

Our price, our value, is the blood-
-for there is no life without a great gift
of life, the laying down, the handing over
of life: there is no human life that lives
that did not cost others their very lives:
we are born, we live and grow--at the cost
of life! Others died so that we might live-
-this is the ancient truth taught by blood
on the doorposts--and brought to perfection
by the very blood of Christ upon the Cross!

As I receive --so Jesus teaches
me--so must I give, in a kind of holy com-
plicity with Him: the greatest becomes the
least, so that the least of us may become
instruments of the best, givers of the best.
Eternal Life shared our our vulnerable, temporal
existence, in order that our mortal natures

might become gifts of eternal life.

So I learn how great the cost and how precious the gift: "If I washed your feet--I who am Teacher and Lord--then you must wash each others feet . . . As I have done, so must you do." This is the cost. "Father, it is My wish: where I am, there may they be." This, the gift. The cost: our lives. The gift: HIS, ours! "May they all be One, Heavenly Father, I in You, and they in Me: May they--may We--all be One!"

So we pray tonight, gathered together in final memory of our Savior, this holy night. So we share one life with one another at the cost of life itself: so we die to all that divides us from one another, all self-seeking, all self-advancement, ambition and pride--that we who are many may become One Body in Christ. Now we share

HOLY THURSDAY -- p5

one common Cup filled with the Blood of Christ,
all the cost of the world. all the sorrow,
the tears and the pain of love itself, love
unto the very end, our great gift and our
great cost. The gift and the cost of God.

GOOD FRIDAY
St. Cecilia Church

17 April 1987

"I AM HE !!"

THE POWER OF TRUTH! "Who is it that you want?" Jesus asks. The crowd with Judas responds, "Jesus the Nazorean!" "I am He!" Jesus proclaims. Fear and Violence are powerless when faced with TRUTH!

"If you seek me, let these others go," Jesus ~~speaks~~ ^{SAYS BOLDLY} --for His name is the very Truth of God Himself, ~~obedience to the Will of the Father: "Of those you give Me, I lose nothing!"~~

Jesus: Truth of God, stronger than lies, brighter than darkness, far more powerful than hate, even to death itself.

We are ~~with~~ ^{LIKE} Peter: fearful of the dark, quick to return hate for hate, blow for blow, violence for injury threatened--

We, too, hide ourselves in the dark, warming our hands with bystanders, losing

GOOD FRIDAY -- p2

ourselves in the croud--which so easily justifies our compromises and cowardices: when everyone is doing it, evil seems a lot more tolerable, housebroken, ^{and} tame. If no one else is sticking their neck out, why indeed need I? Heroism, ~~is not required for decent living for the most part.~~ "Aren't you too one of this man's followers?" the little slave girl asks. With Peter we easily tell the little lie: Follower? I wouldn't say "follower" exactly. No, not I! The night is cold and the fire is warm where most everyone seems to be and wants to huddle. Why shouldn't I be there as well.

"Are you a king?' Pilate asks.

"Why do you ask, Jesus responds--is this just what everyone else is saying, or are you looking for a King yourself?" "I am no Jew," Pilate retorts: always looking for a king, always

GOOD FRIDAY -- p3

searching, never satisfied, always in conflict,
never at peace. Here the man of reason, ~~the~~
~~PAX ROMANA~~ asks, "why have your very own people
delivered you over to me, a hated foriegner?"
Good question.

"Because this is not my Kingdom,"
Jesus says--a world of power and violence,
a world of fragile alliances and uncertain
conflicts, and always, endless, endless fears.
I come for the TRUTH -- and all those who
seek Truth hear My voice!

TRUTH! What is Truth? So asks the
man of reasonableness, the delusion of power
and the pretense of might. How helpless to
do ~~the~~ right is this one who can only recognize
money, power, military might. The man of
violence, the slave of fear is powerless before
the Truth. You cannot be a friend of Truth

GOOD FRIDAY --p4

and a friend of Caesar. You cannot serve God and selfish gain. So Pilate handed Him over, and so do we--with the odd little gesture of self-justification, a little token of defiance: "Quod scripsi, scripsi"--what I have written I have written.

So we join the soldiers and continue to divide Christ--garments and clothing, taking a little of Him, a piece here and there, throwing the dice, gambling for time--observers rather than participants at the cross, talkers rather than doers, compromising, going along the path of least resistance, when in doubt arguing about clothing: "Let's throw dice to see who gets it!"

Jesus is alone on the cross--while we argue about His clothes--and He remembers His ancient thirst and sees His sorrowing Mother and ~~the~~ the woman at the foot of the cross-

GOOD FRIDAY -- p5

--and the disciple He so loves: Oh Woman of Sorrows, woman of love--there is your SON:
oh here is where faith is born, there is hope begun--in a Mother's endless pain--and love,) —
from the womb of Mary beneath the Cross there faith and hope and love is born. Beneath the cross there is our Mother!

And there is our Savior's thirst--now quenched in our common sour wine. Now it is all finished--and from our Savior's side we are born, in blood and water. ~~And so He passes over His Spirit~~

We look upon Him whom we have pierced. We see His wounds, we bind them up with our anxieties and fears. We bring Him to the garden where our hopes first began and lay Him in the tomb and then we wait along with all those who come by night.

HOLY SATURDAY

18 April 1987

St. Paul (Croatian)

"Let them have dominion . . ."

Power is made perfect in weakness--
-St. Paul testifies to the Corinthians (2
Cor. 12:9), when he experienced the voice
of Christ in the middle of his trials. "I
have counted all to be rubbish," he cries
from his prison cell, "for the surpassing
value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord . .
. and the power of His Resurrection and the
common bond of His sufferings . . . "
(Phil. 3: 8, 10).

You are looking for Him, He is
not here ! This is the good news, the powerful
news that is now our life: He is risen and
He goes before us. Come and see the spot
where He was laid--then go quickly and tell
the others the good news!

We are so often overcome by bad

news--we hear it so often, and it is so easy to surrender to cynicism, self-pity, negative thinking. What's the use, we say, looking at the tombs of good intentions come to frustration, hard work come to failure. Why bother, why try anymore.

"He is not here!" the angel says:
Faith moves mountains, and the earthquake rolls away the stones--see the place where He lay! Do not be afraid of His wounds, His sorrow, His loss. Do not be ashamed of His cross--there, the victory was won. Death, even death has no power over faith, no hold on hope, and cannot extinguish love.

Love wins in the end: love lost, love spent, love refused--but love wins: for where love is sown in dishonor and death, there life grows to eternity. Love goes ahead of us where we shall see Him!

HOLY SATURDAY -- p3

Love never gives up, St. Paul teaches (cf. I Cor. 13: 1ff.) Love hopes all things, believes all things, endures all things. Love suffers all things and puts up with all things, because love knows and teaches what eye cannot see nor thought conceive-- that fear and hatred, violence and even death cannot defeat and cannot destroy what love builds--for life is mightier than death, giving far greater than taking.

Giving grows great for it multiplies, while taking always divides until it becomes so small it is nothing at all. Increase and multiply and subdue the earth. This is what our Creator said to us from the beginning. Give and you will rule. Take and you always will be a slave. Fear seeks its own, and in the end finds nothing in its fantasies. Self-centered and self-seeking anxiety divides

the gift of God in endless spoils, consuming
in the end its very self in ceaseless hungers
and angers, quenchless thirsts and strife.

The Risen Lord: the last Adam become
life-giving Spirit (I Cor. 15:45) poured out
for us, a fountain of living, life-giving
water! We find life in Him in His death and
ours, in the empty tombs of lives, once dead
by sin, now brought to Life in Him. We find
life in the giving, the pouring out of life,
in the sharing of life, and in our bond this
night with Him, Our Way, our Truth, our Life,
our Risen Peace!

EASTER SUNDAY

19 April 1987

St. Mary of Czestohowa

"Blessed are those who do not see and yet believe"

He was despised / and rejected / of men / a man of sorrow / and afflicted / at grief

"The Lord has been taken from the tomb! And we don't know where they have put him!" The stone has been rolled away while it is still dark when Mary comes to the tomb and this is her first pronouncement of the Good News!

It does not sound all that good--this good news. The Lord is gone! The tomb is empty--our memories fade, our strength and energies fail. The Lord has been taken from this tomb, this world of death and loss, of vain show, of pitiful display.

There is nothing for which we work and struggle, that we see and hear, that we touch and hold on to--in the end, all fails. Our best efforts accomplish all too little, our work never comes out exactly the way we want, our friendships cool and all our relationships end up one way or another very different from what we planned or hoped.

EASTER SUNDAY -- p2

Nothing seems to endure--and in the end, we all grow old and die--if we don't first die young! Is this not a world of tombs--broken promises, empty hopes?

They have taken the Lord from the tomb, Mary cries--and we all run to the tomb, and peer inside. We look at the garments discarded, strewn around, and busy ourselves like mothers picking up socks and underwear and shirts and trousers left behind by thoughtless children, grown up too fast, and now gone away. Empty rooms and empty tombs--the ache is the same and we feel the chill and the cold of it all. The first wind of Sister Death -- or the first breath of the Spirit blowing where He wills-- Come, silent spring!

We don't know where they have laid Him! With Mary we search, in sorrow sometimes and tears--but in faith and hope and love.

"Do you believe because you see, Thomas?"

Jesus asks later on, "Blessed is the one who does not see, and yet believes."

So Mary and we all--often do not see, because we see too much emptiness, feel too much coldness, gather up so many cloths smeared and smudged with marks of sorrow and pain and death. We gather them up into a seamless robe of faith and hope, for these are the banners of our victory--and His. Love.

No death is empty now, and no loss is failure through and through when filled with faith and alive with hope. We run to the tomb eagerly: Christ is risen! and we believe that we shall meet Him, see Him--in the garden, behind closed doors, on the shore of the lake, making breakfast for us all.

We do not know where they have laid Him, but we do know that He will find us,

EASTER SUNDAY -- p4

Good Shepherd of the flock. I know Mine and Mine know Me, He said, and they shall recognize My voice, for I hear and know their cries. So Jesus said once--and I believe that He does not fail and will not fail to hear all the cries of our too anxious hearts.

We do not see--but He sees! We do not know, but He teaches--in the angels He sends us every day--the little ordinary people in our lives--dropped often like discarded clothing around the tombs of our disappointments and broken dreams. We seek Him, groping in the dark, but He finds us, He for Whom "darkness is not darkness at all, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and Light are alike to Him," (Ps. 139: 12)--and He finds us, hearing our voices and our hearts listening for His.

*I know that my Redeemer lives, and that
he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*

I want Jesus to walk to me —

A. The Resurrection means that Jesus made a conscious and definitive claim to walk to you and me forever — 'I will be to you till the end of time.'

B. In all the Gospels, Jesus never refers to his suffering and cross in or out in the same breath referring to his resurrection —

1. All ^{this} was part of the divine plan of salvation.
 A once-for-all event of resurrection
 to place ^{on judge & living} ~~been witness~~ to the living and the dead
 Jesus — the standard by which society is measured

2. a woman, Mary Magdalene
 a disciple
 Peter — leader: "He rose & he believed"

7 Ethical duplications

1. corruption & wickedness now
 replaced by sincerity & truth

2. Signs of despair give way to hope

3. Mary Magdalene — Jesus reclined,
 forgiven & purified

Moral strength & status of Peter
 accepted as leader even after cowardice

John, whom Jesus loved & who loved Jesus

I want Jesus to walk to me —

A. First women to resurrect were 3 people
whom Jesus loved profoundly —

① Mary — reclaimed forgiveness, reclaimed to
purified

② Peter — who denied
leader — accepted even after
denial

③ John — "the disciple whom Jesus loved"

Intro. - poetic beginning

I We are gathered here because we are caught up in the mystery of the Lord's Resurrection and his victory over sin & death. For he truly rose from death and is in us.

A. Resurrection +

1. he would never die or his memory never fade
= simply another Shakespeare in a great fellow
2. a return from death to life - Lazarus - to die again

B. Paul's message -

- 1) death is no longer the final word & definitive act for us ...
- 2) ... for you & me

C. For life & message are normative for human history -
for you personal life & mine; for human ~~substantial~~ inter-relation

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)

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 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 spiring;
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
- 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)

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

Holy Week, 1980
Good Friday - St. George

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, ^{beforehand} 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.

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 marriage 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, ~~today Jesus suffers again in the broken lives of his people?~~
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? People of Lithuania need a Simon of Cyrene to help them carry the cross of oppression.

A Veronica, who compassionately wiped his face with the cloth, and later unfolded it to see its imprint? Lithuanians need a Veronica to relieve the the hardship inscribed in their faces.

A Dismas, who uttered, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Lithuanians need a Dismas to plea, "Remember our people, O Christ."

A Mary Magdalen, Salome, Joanna, or Joses, brave women who attended to Jesus' needs and stayed with him to the end. Lithuanians need such like women to console them in these bitter times.

A Joseph of Arimathea, who faced cowardly and blind rulers, and asked for the Lord's body. Lithuanians need a Joseph of Arimathea to demand respect for those who have given their lives for freedom.

Mary, his mother and our mother, 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." Lithuanians need someone like her to stand with them in this tortuous tale of tension and in this dark night of the soul.

My dear friends, as we meditate on the Lord's Passion, we know that Christ is crucified anew. In so many people, in so many countries, in so many ways God's people walk the Way of the Cross - with no one there to comfort them. Shall we also just stand by and watch? Or, shall we walk with Jesus, as Jesus walked with us?

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you - because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*I want Jesus to walk to me. //
all along my pilgrim journey,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk to me.*