



Easter Message 2017

'Spirit of new life, breathed into me from the Risen Christ, prepare me to celebrate his rising in your power. Something has happened on the first day of the week, powerful enough to heal every wound, to recover every waste, to break down every barrier, to unlock every prison, to forgive every transgression, to unite everything at odds. There is love enough to flood every heart, to raise everyone dead and lost... but this is too much for me to grasp and, without your help, overwhelmed by the immensity of it all, I will be tempted to shrink the resurrection to the proportions of my own understanding and my Easter will be worldly and banal. Help me to loose myself in adoration. I cannot grasp the resurrection. But it can grasp me and give rise in me to a loving heart that is losing the limits of its compassion....'

Meditation from A Season for the Spirit by Martin L. Smith, SSJE (pg 206-7)

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It has been said, "God made us without us, and redeemed us without us, but cannot save us without us." Just as the Virgin Mary was a willing participant for God to accomplish the salvation of the world, so too we must be willing to allow God to save us from ourselves. We can only do this through understand the link between the cross and resurrection. Christ was nailed to the cross to restore humanity's relationship with God. It was God's act in Christ this was done. God reached out to us, expecting us to experience God's love and in return, we reciprocate our love to God for first loving us. Thus, we have died to the old life of sin and raised to new-life in Christ.

Martin Smith SSJE asserts in the above meditation, "we cannot grasp the resurrection, but it can grasp us and give rise to a loving heart, that is losing the limits of its compassion." The resurrection provides us with hope that transcends all barriers and boundaries. It embraces us and we in turn are called to live resurrected lives. This means you and I, contemporary disciples are invited to transform the world, being bearers of hope to the downtrodden, displaced, desolate, the disconsolate and the dejected of this world.

With the present economic crisis and the forces that seem to create dysfunction and dislocation, the cross stands as that towering image, reminding us that we are not alone on this journey. As we walk in the shadows of the cross, reflecting on Jesus' suffering, Jesus walks with us in our suffering today, tomorrow and in the future. We cannot afford to allow society's machinations to entice us into believing that quick fix schemes and new age techniques are the better methods for salvation or the remedy for the pain of hopelessness. For Christians and the world, there is a better solution to cast our cares, concerns, hopes, dreams and aspirations on the cross, trusting that God in Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit will sustain and carry us through the muddy waters, the stormy seas, the meandering streams and the calm rivers.

Friends, when we shout our Easter refrain "*Alleluia Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia*" allow it to reverberate in our hearts, but also penetrate the world around us, where so many of our sisters and brothers cannot grasp or experience the joy of the resurrection. I believe this can be done, when we too take up our crosses and live cruciform lives as we suffer with and care for the least in our communities.

And so, my beloved in Christ, let us with confidence and boldness of faith go into the world to witness and attest to the power of God's redeeming love, as we sing with gusto

Jesus Christ is risen to-day Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy-day Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss Alleluia!

But the pains which he endured Alleluia!
Our salvation have procured Alleluia!
Now above the sky he's king Alleluia!
Where the angels ever sing Alleluia!

Let us join with the angels to forever sing "*Alleluia Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia*"

A blessed and joyous Easter to all.

Your Brother in Christ,


The Rev. Steve L. Foster
Rector