

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Easter Sunday

By: Fr. Christopher Weekly S.J.

In the glory of this holy morning, it is difficult to imagine how horribly the day began on the first Easter . . . when the women came to the tomb. At best, they were trying to cope with their grief that hard plan that comes, as the poet William Stafford once said, when “all the stars in the sky go down,” leaving one in darkness, forcing one to “learn to survive” . . . no longer feeling “that lifelong lunge for worlds to be found.” Mary Magdalene, Joanna, the mother of James, and the other the women, had, after all, been the companions of Jesus since he first welcomed them as disciples in Galilee. With Peter and a motley group of misfit men, these women had lunged into new worlds . . . , they were set free to experience exciting new worlds through the healing, the forgiveness, the abundant life they had found at the side of Jesus Christ.

The closest experience we, perhaps, have had to such a loss is experiencing the sudden and expected death of a loved one, or, as a nation, perhaps the shock we felt after 9/11. And it’s our human instinct, in the initial moments of coping, to go the place of tragedy, to place pictures, cards, flowers, to light candles and tie ribbons in memory. This is our way, like the women of Galilee, of taking spices to the tombs of our own lives. What we don’t do is go to the graveyards of our lives and expect to find the stone of our grief immediately rolled away.

Nor do these women! They are terrorized, and bow their heads at the figures in dazzling garments. But the question these angelic visitors pose to them awakens them, and it rings down the years to our time: “Why do you seek the living one among the dead?” “Why do you seek the living one among the dead?” With this question, the women remember what Jesus said, they remember how he said he must suffer betrayal and crucifixion before he could rise. It is this remembrance that brings them, finally, from their initial terror to amazement. Of course he is not going to be in this place of death!

As Peter will later testify, that God raised Jesus from the dead was witnessed not in a graveyard encounter, but in the meals he ate and drank with them after his resurrection, and the way he became visible, even behind the locked doors of their fear. Or, as St. Paul experienced, the risen Christ is realized when “malice and wickedness”

melt away from our lives, and are replaced with “sincerity and truth” in our dealings with one another. So it with us: the risen Christ will be deeply felt in our lives, not in the graveyard of our fears and sorrows, but when, in our daily living, we discover again “that lifelong lunge for worlds to be found,” and affirm, after “all the stars in the sky go down,” “There is another star.”

This is not to deny or denigrate our need to grieve, initially, our sorrows. But the resurrection of Christ challenges us, as it challenged those holy women and men of Galilee, to remember, that beyond the betrayals and crucifixions of our own lives the living Christ is “out there” among the living, challenges us to expect our living Christ to be tangible, and deeply felt When we eat and drink together in justice and in love, when we forgive when another in the name of God, when we exchange malice for sincerity of heart. These are the markers, the indicators, that Christ is alive in our community!

Some have found the risen Christ, beyond the betrayals and crucifixion of our consumer culture, in the fellowship and food shared at St. Martin de Porres shelter, and in time given to so many agencies that serve the needy around Puget Sound, remembering that insofar as we welcome the poor, we welcome Christ.

I found the risen Christ recently, simply in sharing tea one afternoon, with one of our elders, just days after she buried her husband. She was radiant with gratitude for the life she had shared with the love of her life, and glowing with the consolation that God gives to us, the living, when we remember that if we are united with Christ in death, we shall be united again in the resurrection.

Yes, we must go to the graveyards of our lives and grieve what is lost. But as people of baptismal faith, we get up and get going believing that we will meet the risen Christ in our eating and drinking with one another, in the healing words we speak, in the forgiveness we extend even to those who betray and crucify us. So friends, this fresh Easter day, do not look for the Living One among the dead. Lunge into the world . . . that is where we will find the risen Christ!

READINGS OF THE WEEK

Acts 10:37-43

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

Luke 24:1-12

March 31, 2013

復活主日

阿爾貝·范諾怡樞機主教

今天我們慶祝主的復活。復活節是禮儀年全年中最重要的一個節日。它是一個光的節日：復活了的主光照我們，他在我們心中注入極大的喜樂，無限的希望，也把愛充滿在我們心中。

福音給我們敘述巴斯挂主日清晨的事件。安息日一過，清晨，天還黑的時候，瑪利亞·瑪達肋納來到墳墓。按照法律的嚴格規則，安息日是不可以走動的。但是安息日結束于晚上；所以天還黑的時候，瑪利亞就動身前往墳墓去了。

瑪利亞充滿愛情，但也充滿痛苦。當她來到墳墓時，驚奇地發現石頭已經從墓穴滾開了。

整篇經文要使我们明白，對門徒來說，耶穌的復活是一件料想不到的事。他們以為一切都要因耶穌的死而結束，他們沒有明白耶穌關於自己復活所做的預言。

事實上我們應該承認，這些預言，即我們在福音中所念到的，並不是很清楚。耶穌曾說“被舉起來”，它并不定然要被解釋為“復活”；或說成“蘇醒”。門徒們不知道這句話論及什麼。所以他們對主耶穌的復活毫無準備。

看到石頭被挪開，瑪利亞·瑪達肋納沒有下結論主復活了，而是說「他們從墳墓中把主搬走了」。復活，為她是一件奇怪和不可思議的事。主死了，不可能自己從墳墓中出來；所以他們把他搬走了，而「我們不知道他們把他放在哪裡了」。這是一個侵犯墳墓的行動。瑪利亞·瑪達肋納就這樣做了結論。

瑪利亞跑去把這件事告訴兩位門徒，他們立刻來到墳墓，為證實婦女的敘述。這兩位門徒是西滿伯多祿和耶穌所愛的那位門徒。福音作者給我們指出那另一位門徒雖然跑得比較快，先來到墳墓---因為可能他比較年輕---他十分尊重伯多祿，真正地認為他是宗徒之長；所以不立刻進入墳墓，而讓伯多祿先進去。

福音說：「隨著他的西滿伯多祿也來到了，進了墓穴，看見了放在地上的殮布，也看見耶穌頭上的那塊汗巾，不同殮布放在一起，而另在一處卷著」。伯多祿所看到的見證了一件的確奇怪的事情。它究竟有什麼意義？如果壞人們把耶穌的身體搬走了，一定會把殮布和汗巾帶走，不會殮布留在地上，把汗巾卷起放在另一處的。

另一個門徒進入墳墓時，他也看到殮布和汗巾，但他好像有了感召，突然明白：耶穌的身體沒被偷走。耶穌恢復了生命：是與那塵世不同的一種生命；在這生命中殮布與汗巾沒有一點用處。經上說「另個門徒一看見就相信了」。

福音作者而後指出：「這是因為他們還不明白耶穌必須從死者中復活的那段聖經」。若望想要使我们明白對耶穌復活事件的識別不是來自聖經，相反地，而是由這件事光照了聖經。只是在這件事發生後，門徒們才明白聖經要說的是什麼，以及耶穌的預言意指什麼。起初他們不知道當如何解釋。耶穌的復活這件事光照了門徒們思想和心靈。

復活了耶穌是光的泉源，這光十分令人欣慰，是正面的。他的復活揭露了他受苦難的意義。沒有復活，耶穌的苦難顯得好像是一悲劇事件，負面的，一個可怕的失敗，一個沒有希望的結局。反之，耶穌的復活展示出受難的整個價值，表示他沒有被打敗，是一大勝利，愛的勝利。善牧為他的羊舍掉了自己的性命（若十，11）。就如耶穌所說，「沒有人有比這更大的愛情：為自己的朋友舍掉性命」（若 15，13）耶穌以愛去經歷他的苦難；所以他復活了。他得到一個不屬於塵世的新生命。他獲得一個奧秘的、永恆的、充滿美麗和威能的生命。

我們接受耶穌復活的訊息。我們知道如果不藉著信德我們不能瞭解耶穌的復活。就人性的角度來說，復活是一個不能解釋的事情。但信德讓我們意識到天主的介入，並使我们接受這道強光，它不但光照耶穌的奧秘，而且也光照我們整個的存在。