

## Easter Vigil C2022

Brothers and Sister, Beloved Friends,

When something good, but unexpected, happens to someone, he is overjoyed and happy. The joy comes from the fact he never dreamt of such an outcome. As he did not plan for it, everything becomes as a surprise, but a good one. So was the resurrection of Jesus for the group of women who were following him and who witnessed his Passion and death of the cross.

When Jesus died that Friday evening, everything became to them sad. They were inconsolable. It was as though all their hope for life died with Jesus. But, what a surprise that morning when they went to the tomb to embalm his body, according to the Jewish tradition! The Gospel says that “They found the stone rolled away from the tomb; but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus”. Few minutes later, the two angels spoke to them in terms like of a reproach: “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but he has been raised”.

Tonight we come together around the table of the Eucharist proclaiming that Jesus Christ is alive. He is risen from the dead. Death could not hold him prisoner in its abyss forever. He has triumphed over death and its kingdom.

Those who killed Jesus thought that it was over with him; but that was not true. It was just their assumption, but not God’s plan. God’s plan was that Christ should die on the cross in order to save mankind; then, to be raised on the third day.

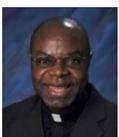
Today is the day of joy that proclaims that Jesus Christ is risen. His resurrection is our resurrection. As he came in the world and took flesh in order to assume our humanity, so are we called to rise with him from the dead!

The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our faith. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, people would certainly remember him as we do with important personalities who have marked world history. But, all that would just be a chapter in the books of history and nothing more. It is because Jesus Christ is risen that almost two billions of Christians throughout the world believe in him and worship him as savior and Lord.

The resurrection of Jesus teaches us that we have a future, not in the graves, but in heaven. Those who have died in faith in Jesus Christ are no more in the graves, but in heaven with him. They share in the divine life of Jesus in heaven. Did not Jesus promise to the good thief who was crucified with him on the cross: “Today, you will be with me in the paradise”? So are all those who have died in Jesus. Their hope in Jesus was not vain.

The resurrection of Jesus teaches us that there is more to life than the present situation of suffering, violence and war. We are meant for more: to share one day in the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus pushes us to have another look on the reality of death as human phenomenon. For sure, we cannot deny the sadness of the death of our beloved ones, the anxiety it causes us and the void it leaves around us. However, whatever might be its burden on us and the sorrow it brings, death is not an absolute reality. We die with the hope of something bigger than it. Death is just the transformation of our present condition of life. It cannot prevent God’s life to flourish in us. Like Christ, when we die, God gives us life anew. He let us share in the resurrection of Jesus. In this Holy Night, may you be strengthened by the resurrection of Jesus! May you hope again in spite of all the problems you are going through today! God bless you all!

**Ezequiel 36: 16-17a, 18-28; Romans 6: 3-11; Luke 24: 1-12**



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