

Our Lord Jesus Christ: He is risen!!! ...reply ...

The Gospel reading has an ending of St. John who said –
“He saw, and believed.”

How about us today – do we see and do we believe?

My question to you each of you this morning: are you Risen with Him?

Are you trying to elevate your life from sinfulness /
 unto righteousness...

are you ready to walk the road of sanctification, are you going to seek
His Holiness?

Are you ready to give your life to Jesus Christ:

as we say during the Eucharist:

the giving of “our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy
 and living sacrifice unto (God)...

On this morning of ***celebration and happiness*** we should also be
 examining our own lives.

As we have been reading all of “Passion Narratives” this week, it has
 reminded me of a quote I once read (CS Lewis), sort of a warning:

“One who wishes to remain a sound **“atheist”** cannot be too careful of
 his readings” (— C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life.*)

This is very true: During this Lenten period, *morning after morning* and
evening after evening and *mass after mass*,

we have read all of the Passion accounts of our Lord,
and of the prophecies and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

This stack of evidence is overwhelming and very convincing –

One thing we do not lack is the evidence of the Passion and of the Resurrection of our Lord –

Prophecies were made / and those prophecies became fulfilled / by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Truth - - - Truth: is what we all seek not just this morning,
but every day.

John tells us Jhn 1:14 “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,
and we beheld his glory,

the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full **of grace and truth**.

From the very lips of Jesus we hear Jhn 14:6 I am the way, **the truth**, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Do we truly hear these words, do we believe?

When Pilot questioned Jesus Kingship he was told by our Lord

Jhn 18:37 “Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world,

that I should **bear witness unto the truth**. Every one that is **of the truth** heareth my voice.

This morning my brethren let us all pray that we hear His voice and **seek His Truth** on this day of **His** Glorious Resurrection.

Indeed, yes indeed: **He is risen.**

I speak to all this morning, but especially to those who still struggle with their faith,

to those who seem unsure of Christ's place within their hearts and their lives.

I feel sometimes we do a dis-service to the word of being "saved."

To some it is like a **flash of lightning** at some point in their life, ...

As if there is a big Bang - and **it is a done deal.**

For some this might be true, but for others (like myself) faith is more of a process of sanctification (of being made holy) –

it is along this path, sometimes a very long path, that many come to our Lord.

CS Lewis speaks about his own conversion from being an atheist to a Christian as he wrote:

"It was more like when a man, after a long sleep, still lying motionless in bed, becomes aware / that he is now awake." *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life.*

May we all awaken this day from any ***spiritual sleeping*** within the loving arms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For those like me who slept for many years, having some inkling that -
yes God is real –

I want to speak of accepting and growing spiritually: and finally walking
with Christ within our daily lives.

As American's we are taught to esteem ourselves (self-esteem) and of
being independent from anything or anyone.

The giving of self for another has become more and more difficult in
today's secular world as freedom is seek from others.

From Lewis book *Surprised by Joy* he writes:

“But, of course, what mattered most of all / was my deep-seated
hatred of authority,

my monstrous individualism, my lawlessness.

No word in my vocabulary expressed deeper hatred -- than the word
INTERFERENCE.

But Christianity placed at the centre... seemed to me a /

transcen /den/tal Interferer.

If its picture were true, then no sort of 'treaty with reality' could ever
be possible.

There was no region even in the innermost depth of one's soul (nay,
there least of all) which one could surround with a barbed wire fence
and guard with a notice “No Admittance.”

And that was what I wanted; some area, however small, of which I could say to all other beings,

'This is my business and mine only.'

I believe a few of us here this morning can relate to these words – I bet I could even get a few “amen” or even a right on brother.

So, it seems to me that something has to motivate us to open ourselves – to take down the “No Admittance” sign from our heart.

Often, emotions can often keep us from our God...

Emotions in our lives can lead us in many directions – often confusing us.

Our emotions can lead us to seek things that give a happiness that is temporary and limited

and often harmful to us –

Emotions can lead us to things and places / that are actually contrary to who we really are (the person God created...)

(emotions can lead to us getting high from this or that – pick your pleasure –

To hatred and hardness of heart –

To false / idols and worshipping of them -

to sexual perversions and experimentations –

and to the fleeing from any type of authority –

(especially those which demand obedience.)

**Emotions mostly / are feelings / flowing from and dealing with/
our self-esteem.**

This roller coaster ride of emotions can, and will, take you on a ride that will evidently end.

The ride ends and dies because it is temporary – rarely has it a solid foundation.

The “high” is cheap (whether it be drugs or sex or whatever....)

because it can only go so high and then the disappointment sets in – as it ends.

The high often becomes a new low –

The cycle repeats and repeats as we go from one emotion to another.

One result is that finally we get tired and become more confused and often we become depressed, angry, and agitated daily, as we seek for relief / in all of the wrong places.

However, the Good News this morning is that Christianity offers you more than an emotional high.

A Christian’s faith, if properly feed, never ends...it is forever

(we have many people in our parish which is proof of this point.)

As we celebrate Easter Today - The Resurrection of our Lord - two words come to mind ... Joy and Peace.

Joy is a feeling of delight and of well-being: rejoicing at God's fulfillment of his promise

and its Jewish roots imply of state of being satisfied or contentment.

Peace in OT readings often implies a tranquility or state of calmness

and its NT usage carries it further as a gift from Jesus,

as peace is promised to his disciples and all his followers

and **this peace** is unique / in that it is everlasting and flawless,

unlike any peace offered by the world.

These two words – **Joy and Peace**: if truth is ours in Jesus Christ and if we seek them,

they will motivate us (lead us) to open our hearts to his grace which is His love for each and every one of you.

He moves us from things temporary to things solid and True –

all this is offered to you this Easter morning.

In Ps 16:11 we read "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in **thy presence is fulness of joy**;

at thy right hand there are **pleasures for evermore**."

Christ sits on the right hand of the Father, and it is through Him that we are to seek Joy and Peace. Mar 16:19 & Act 2:33

Any perceived “joy” outside of the wisdom of Christ is also dangerous: as we are told Proverbs 15:21

“**Folly is joy** / to him / that is destitute of wisdom...”

let not our joy become folly!

His **peace** and His **joy** is yours – even this day: 1Pe 1:8 ...

To each of you for:

“Whom having not seen, (yet) ye love;

in whom, though now ye see him not,

yet believing,

ye rejoice with **joy unspeakable** and full of glory.”

“the **joy** of the Lord (can be and) is **your strength** (Neh 8:10).”

John even tells us 1Jo 1:4

And these things write we unto you, **that your joy may be full.**

So many things and testimonies have indeed been written -

may they become the **foundation** of your **Joy** and **Peace**.

May this day lead you to “Seek ye the joy of Christ” –

putting aside all of the emotional confusion of this world

and “grabbing hold” of a joy that is beyond any emotions of this or any other day.

Remembering that “Pleasures” are not substitutes for “Joy” –
and Joy is not a substitute for Pleasure.

One is temporal and the other eternal.

However, many people try to replace joy with pleasures which often lead to sin,

and pulls us away from God – from True **Joy and True Peace**.

Some things which bring tribulations pretend to be pleasures
and this make the tribulation even more difficult to handle.

Move from self to the acceptance of Jesus Christ, as your Lord and Saviour.

Empty yourselves that **He may fill you**.

He is risen indeed and He desires that you to rise above this world of sin

and for you to walk with Him into the Righteousness which is His Glory.

Relax my friends:

“The needy shall not always be forgotten, the expectation of the poor shall not parish” forever (Ps 9:18).

“Have hope / and remember / there are no helpless situations, there are only hopeless men (and women)” Claire Boothe Luce.

So my brothers and sisters – have hope – for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ Jn 1:17.

Listen to a few verses from Paul to the Romans:

Rom 8:25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Rom 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

Rom 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning,

that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures / might have hope.

**I pray for victory / for each of you this morning , which comes
only from Christ:**

Rom 15:13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace / in believing, / that ye may abound in hope, / through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Amen...

He is risen....Indeed.

The hour cometh and now is....