

Rev. Donato Infante III
Easter 2019

That Christ is truly risen
from the dead we know.
Victorious King, Thy mercy show!
Amen. Alleluia.

Last night we had the very beautiful but also very long Easter Vigil. After these Masses I am wide awake and have trouble falling asleep. You might say that today I have gotten up early after a late night. It would sound odd if you said that I am gotten up early, wouldn't it? And yet that is exactly what we say about Jesus all the time. "Christ is risen." We don't say "Christ has risen" even though that sounds more normal to us in every other area of our life. You are now thinking, "Father, it is too early for this grammar lesson. We are on school break still." But this grammar lesson captures what it is all about!

We do not have a tense in English for what the Greek tells us. Not only has he risen, but he is risen..still! Christ is not like Lazarus who will die again. He has definitively conquered sin and death. We are not here just to celebrate some historical fact. We are here to celebrate a living reality. He is risen not just today but forever, every day, we live with the knowledge that he has conquered sin and death. Is that good news or what?

We got to this moment today living a forty day fast. We have fasted from meat on Fridays, we have fasted from food on Good Friday and Ash Wednesday, and we have fasted from other things as well, whether bourbon or Netflix or Facebook. We have done this because those who hunger for God fast. Each week before receiving the Eucharist we fast one hour from food so that we hunger for God. To prepare for the giving to us of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday, to prepare for the gift of God's sacraments to us, we fasted for forty days.

When blood and water poured out from the side of Christ on the cross, the Church was born with the power of the sacraments. Because you see, God does not want you to merely know something about him. He wants you to encounter him. He wants to unleash his power in your life.

Maybe you come here today like you do every Sunday, but maybe you are here on this special day of Easter only. Either way, we might struggle with something. Maybe you struggle with faith, with doubt, with anxiety, with shame, but God wants to unleash his power in your life. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead wants to work in your life.

Each of the sacraments is designed to heal us, to transform us, to unleash the power of God in our lives. When we are feeling rejected, we recall our baptism in which we became the beloved sons and daughters of God. When we feel powerless, we call upon the graces we received in confirmation in which we were strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit. When we feel abandoned, we know we have Christ's abiding presence, and that of the whole Church, in the Eucharist. When we feel guilt and shame, we know we can be forgiven.

People think of sacraments as mere rituals, like eighth grade graduation: it doesn't really matter if you go or not. On the contrary, the sacraments are encounters with the risen Christ. They are filled with power. They come forth from the mighty power of his right hand to touch us and transform us.

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad." Christ is risen from the dead. Do not put him back in the tomb and roll the stone back up like nothing has changed. Everything *is* changed. You are meant to be set free like Christ was free, to bear the image of Jesus to the whole world. You are meant to seek that which is above. Christ is not just risen today, but everyday.

For more:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lm9CJw-lry0>

Bob Schuchts, *Be Transformed*