

Easter Message

As I sit here thinking about the Easter festival, my mind wanders to the question 'What is Easter really about?' The Easter message is not about memories or ideals or insights. At Easter, we do not gather to celebrate a doctrine or to celebrate Jesus' message of hope, not His ethic of love nor His promise of eternal life. But rather the core of our celebration is the fact that **Jesus is alive right now.**

Jesus truly died; He was truly lost on the cross. Now He is alive and available to us. "Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here, **He is risen.**" The resurrection is not a metaphor to disguise the fact that Jesus remains as dead as He was on Good Friday and that His body is rotting in the grave or that His bones remain somewhere to be found. **Jesus is alive.** He lives and He loves us. The Easter message is that we have a Saviour who died for us while we were still sinners. For us, each Sunday is a little celebration of this most important fact. Christ lives for us and calls us to a life of discipleship. Because of Easter, the Eucharist is indeed the Bread come down from heaven. Every sorrow, every disappointment, every loss, every injustice, every evil is thwarted. Death is not the end but only a comma, and, if we live in God's love, we will live forever.

Let us find strength in the presence of the risen Lord in His word, His sacraments, His community of faith. Let us recommit ourselves to our baptismal promises and

follow Jesus and invite others to be a part of Christ's family.

Today many of us are reluctant to bear witness to their faith. We wait for people to come to us and when inquirers do come, all too often we are unprepared to give answers. Faith, to be sure, can not and should not be forced on people, but it should be as widely available as possible. If we have been brought into that life-giving communion with Christ that is the fruit of faith, we should be eager to understand what we believe and to share it with others. Our readiness to spread the Gospel cannot be a matter of perfunctory obedience. It must spring from a deep appreciation of how much we have received and how much we have to give.

At Easter, we are reminded that Jesus has come not to make admirers, but to make disciples of men and women who will continue His mission and walk with Him imitating His love and mercy in their own lives. May the joy of Easter inspire us to share the great gifts we have received and to live lives that proclaim **Jesus Christ is risen and is alive right now.** Go celebrate!

In the Name of the Risen Lord,

Lauraine