

Easter Vigil Reflection

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There is a strange feeling in the air today. The darkness of uncertainty still envelops the earth. Tenebrous stress continues to take hold of our minds. The calamitous fear of sickness either in our self or in a loved one torments our hearts. Despair threatens to invade our souls due to the looming presence of death. Yet, it is Easter.

There is silence and stillness and solitude. Social distancing by now feels as if we were in forced hibernation right at the onset of Spring - and with us the whole of creation. Has God been asleep during this time of trial? God was asleep for a while, for sure. God fell asleep in the flesh but is now risen from the dead. It is Easter.

The suffering Jesus. The dead Christ. Our Risen Lord has come back with a message:

To those who have died of this terrible illness, He embraces. While asleep, He met them and rejoiced in the end of their suffering and pain. Holding up His cross, He summoned them, "Awake! Come into my light! Rise from the dead, for I am your life. Rise up, work of my hands, you who were created in my image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in me and I in you; together we form one person and cannot be separated."

To those still ill, He consoles. He reminds them that He still bears the marks of suffering in his flesh; that He too cried out in pain, shed many tears, and abandoned Himself to His Father's will so that His suffering, His cross, would become redemption; that is, salvation for all. So He invites the sick and suffering to unite their crosses to His cross so that the mystery of redemption may also be their triumph.

To the rest of us, He commands to continue working to restore health, to restore balance, to get out of our self-preoccupation and to take care of the poorest and neediest of the world:

"Lead the way!" our Risen Lord asks. "Do not be afraid to selflessly keep working to provide for those who are hungry and thirsty."

"Lead the way!" He beckons us. "The stranger, naked, and imprisoned await your righteous acts."

"Lead the way!" He emphatically demands. "The ill of the world needs you more than ever. Stand up! Be strong! Preach the Good News with your acts."

That is the message of our Risen Lord to us, to those who have been living in silence and stillness and solitude. His Resurrection impregnates our silence with meaning, our stillness with the seeds of righteous deeds, and our solitude with longing for loving relationships. It is Easter. He is Risen from the dead and with Him, we too will rise.