

JOY  
R.C.I.A. parousia  
Deacon George Collins

He is risen Allelulia! He is risen "Praise God." It is unbelievable by the women, by the apostles, by Thomas, by the disciples on road to Emmaus. Recognition came in breaking of bread. He is unrecognized till the breaking of bread. It began at the Last Supper, the breaking of the bread. "This is my body." That is how they knew him; that is how we recognize him. Thomas needed to touch him. "Thomas, you believe because you touched me. Blessed are those who have not seen and believe." But we also need to touch him and we do so in the reception of communion.

Our catechumens and candidates, who have made a long journey, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, will come to know Him at the breaking of the bread. The breaking of the bread is our outward recognition of the risen Christ.

Jesus died once and rose from the dead once. The death and resurrection are one event. His death is meaningless without resurrection and resurrection is the fulfillment of His promise. To see the suffering Christ is to see the resurrected Christ. To see the resurrected Christ is to see the suffering Christ.

The welcoming Christ, His outstretched arms on the cross welcome us to His suffering world. It is denial, rejection, ridicule, abuse, all for the glory of God. Take up your cross and follow me.

What do I want for me? To be happy! Then I want more happy and more happy. Happy is about me and my future. The pursuit of happy can be a false god because it's an insatiable focus on me, myself and I. Jesus didn't promise happy, He promised joy. What is joy? It is the satisfaction of generosity, forgiveness, forbearance; of justice, mercy, compassion; all the virtues of life.

Joy is about my history of generosity. The pursuit of happy is about my selfishness; no one can destroy my history. It is my heavenly treasure where moths and rust can't destroy. The eternal joy of our lives is the breaking of the bread where we come to know the Risen Christ in the Eucharist. We can't be happy and unhappy at the same time, but we can be joyous and happy even when we are unhappy. Happy is about my future which can be taken from me; but JOY is about the things I have done for God's glory and my love of neighbor which can not be taken from me.

We believe and we are joyous!!! I ask you tonight not to wish a happy Easter but to wish a joyous Easter. Happy is for children like jelly beans, chocolate rabbits, Easter baskets etc. The joy of Easter is the salvation that is promised and recognized in the breaking of the bread!!!!!!!!!!

He is risen, Alleluia!!!