



Immaculate Conception
Church

Homily for Easter

Year B 2015

We began tonight in darkness. (Last night we began the great Easter Vigil in darkness.) It was meant to remind us that Easter begins in darkness. Easter begins in despair. Easter begins in defeat.

We see those feelings in the women who journey to the tomb in the pre-dawn hours of morning. We see it in the oils they carry...oils used to prepare a body for burial. They weren't thinking of resurrection. Instead, these women carried in their hearts an emptiness, a hopelessness, a crushing sense of loss and grief that is impossible to express in words.

We know what darkness is all about. If you have ever kept vigil at the bedside of a dying loved one, if you have been unable to sleep because you were afraid of what was to come, if you have ever been overwhelmed by doubt or grief...you've touched the darkness in life. We know the darkness of relationships that shatter and leave us broken. We know the darkness of loneliness. We know what it is like to be misunderstood. We know the darkness and fear of what the future will bring. We know the darkness in the imprisonment brought about by an addiction to alcohol or drugs. We know darkness if we have ever been paralyzed by hurt or ill treatment or been bullied or talked about. You know the darkness when you feel so alone and so deserted that you want to cry out for someone to just bring an ounce of kindness, an ounce of love, into your life.

If you have experienced any of these feelings, if you have walked the corridors of the darkness in life, then Easter is for you. Easter is the celebration of Christ passing from darkness to light. Easter is the celebration of Winter dissolving into Spring. Easter is the celebration of the Cross passing over to the Resurrection. Easter is our journey from fear and darkness into the light of hope.

Easter proclaims that God's love for us is so strong that no matter what darkness we walk through, what fear we confront, or what death we experience, we will not be overcome. Easter is Christ crying out to us not to despair, not to lose hope, not to become prisoners of the darkness. Easter is the stone rolled away from the tomb calling us to walk into the light of a new day, a new time, a new experience of life. Easter is love that rises above the darkness and brings us to the dawn of new life.

Good Friday was about defeat. But God changed that. The cross became the stake that God drove into the heart of darkness. The cross became the key not to defeat but to victory. For the cross was love...love so strong that no sacrifice was too great to make. Out of the defeat of Good Friday comes God's final and perfect victory. Out of this death, comes life; out of agony, comes joy; out of the darkness, comes the dawn; out of despair, comes hope...a hope that no matter what is going on in our lives, God's love is more powerful than anything else.

This is Easter. This is the feast of victory.

And on this Easter we proclaim that in Jesus Christ: all things are different, all life is new, and the light of God's love will shine on in the darkness and the darkness shall never overcome it.

Alleluia, Alleluia!