



St. Anne
CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY

April 24, 2011 Easter Sunday

... Suddenly there was a mighty earthquake ... Then the angel spoke "Do not be afraid! I know you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said." Matthew 28:2&5

Dear Friends;

Christ is risen!

Someone told me they had read that in the recent Japanese earthquake, all of Japan moved north by twelve feet; and even the earth's pole shifted! That is a monumental shift of the earth's plates.

In Matthew's account of the Gospel both the death of Jesus and the resurrection are marked by massive earthquakes. The tectonic shifts symbolically mark a shift in the relations between God and humanity in the person of Christ Jesus.

The earthquakes split rocks and the tombs are opened and the dead are raised to a new kind of life in God. No longer will Jesus or anyone else be left in the shadowy underworld of death. Those gripped by death are set free.

A more important tectonic shift happens in the human psyche of those who believe in the Risen One. They move out from a paralyzing fear to hope and joy. The angel at the tomb tells the women "Do not be afraid." However the soldiers guarding the tomb "were so afraid that they became like the dead." As the women leave their fears give way to joy—"he has been raised."

We are not to look for Jesus among the dead. We are not to make his earthly remains a relic of a dead dream. We are not to make him a martyr and glorify his death. Rather we are to announce the new life that has burst forth. He is not here in the place of the dead. He has gone ahead of you back to Galilee—where it all began. And we begin again. In Jesus life and love have prevailed.

The new life of Jesus is our new life. When we can rise out of our fear and face our life's challenges we rise with Jesus. When we can walk away from life's hurts and still manage to love we rise with Jesus. When we give hope to those in poverty and despair we rise with Jesus. When we comfort those in sorrow we rise with Jesus. When we dream of a world transformed by the love and justice of God we rise with Jesus. When we await calmly our final transformation in Christ we rise with Jesus.

Jesus' resurrection is a tectonic shake-up of our selves and creation—death gives birth to life, despair gives way to hope, and isolation gives way to the blossom of love and community. As the poet Alexander Pope said "Hope springeth eternal in the breast of man." Christ is our hope.

May the joy of this Easter renew your hearts in the hope of a world made new through love!

Peace and Joy,

Fr Ron