

Easter Homily 2014

Theme of our Easter Season: CHRIST IN ME ARISE!

In today's gospel story Mary Magdelene and the other Mary come to the tomb. They are filled with fear and sadness at the death of Jesus.

They came that first Easter hoping against hope to experience the living God. We come to encounter the risen Lord.

And what do we learn from the women's encounter? Four things:

- 1. Do not be afraid!**
- 2. He is risen!**
- 3. The tomb is empty.**
- 4. Go! Share the Good News.**

Please repeat after me; They learned four things.

First, do not be afraid: I ask you, what are you afraid of in your life?

What are some things that people are afraid of? ,

At the beginning of almost every appearance after His resurrection Jesus begins his encounter with either "Do not be afraid" or "Peace be with you." Christ comes to bring calm into our lives.

Second: He is risen! The women had no idea of what would happen. They were totally overwhelmed with the news. He is unexpectedly with us. He is the first-born of the dead. In him we have the promise of new life.

Yes, just as on that first Easter morning, new life is sprouting out all around us. Take, for instance, the news of the rebirth of O'Hair Park: Our parish committed ourselves to develop a new life in the O'Hair Park community, our square mile neighborhood around its 80 acre park. It was slowly dying. Grass in the park was not being cut; abandoned cars were rusting in the woodlands, the children's swings were broken and piles of debris were strewn throughout the neighborhood streets.

Now it is reviving. Last June there was a major clean up of the 80 acre park which 102 people participated; then in September the community hosted a neighborhood picnic with 200 people attending; in the last year over \$15,000 of private funds were donated.

Then just this week: unbeknown to anyone in the community, a trust fund donated \$300, New Hope Non Profit Non Profit Housing Corporation notified us that they are writing a large grant to beautify the park; a suburban priest stopped me outside the Cathedral on Thursday to let me know that he has a homebuilder who may want to help work on the abandoned houses in our community.

Yes, parts of our community which were as much as dead are showing signs of life!

Yes, (1) do not be afraid; (2) he is risen, new life is sprouting in or midst and (3)...

The tomb is empty: The stone which Pilate had ordered to seal the tomb is rolled back and the angel of the Lord is sitting on it as a bird uses a perch declaring that, because of Jesus' resurrection, death has no more power over us

And finally, (4), the angel instructs the women to "Go tell his disciples" GO, GO, GO: Even though they do not have it all together, they are to GO.

But what are they to tell the disciples? Tell them the good news that Jesus,

- the one whom they had placed their hope in;**
- the one who helped us face our fears,**
- the one who had cured our sick and preached the Good News of the Kingdom,**

this Jesus has conquered sin and death. He is risen!

And WHERE are we to go?

They are told to go to Galilee: Why Galilee? It is the place of the humble beginnings of Jesus ministry of preaching, teaching and healing.

My brothers and sisters, we also need to go to our Galilees, to those humble places of our roots, our beginnings, our everyday lives, our families, our friends, our co-workers and our classmates. And tell them the Good news! In the midst of our fears we are to proclaim in our words and healing deeds that Jesus is risen and with us!

(pause)

The other day I attended the 50th wedding anniversary celebration of Vernard and Pat Plain, couple in our parish; They gathered with well over 100 guests including their four children, grandchildren, family and friends and members of their faith family. They shared pictures and stories of the couple's patient endurance, total dedication and deep faith as disciples of the Lord to all whom they came contact with.

On their wedding day, Vernard and Pat received the power of the Spirit; they have been servants to their children, grandchildren, family members and community. On their wedding day the Lord said for them to GO and share the Good News. And they have!

And where will you go? To whom are we sent these fifty days of the Easter season. Yes,(Golda, Essae, Mekel), who are receiving a special outflowing of the Spirit this Easter evening. Continue to join this

community as we accompany the women at the tomb that first Easter morn.

Remember!

- **Do not be afraid**
- **Know that he is risen.**
- **The tomb of death is empty.**
- **On this Easter morning, Go and share the good news.**

May our prayer this Easter day be bold and simple: Christ in me, Arise!