

EASTER VIGIL

CHRIST HAS CONQUERED SIN AND DEATH

When was your happiest day that you will never forget? It may be a special occasion, but the cause of that joy may be temporal or cannot take you to the other world.

Tonight is a night which will never be forgotten, because it is the greatest night of all nights, a night in which Christ brought back our lost dignity. A night on which hope has been brought to the hopeless, and joy to the sorrowful. We lost our first innocence through sin and disobedience, but through the obedience of Christ we are saved. That is why in the beginning of the celebration, we were invited to exult and rejoice.

The readings tell us the efforts God has made to bring us back to Himself. He created us in His own image and likeness, but we destroyed it because of our disobedience. He chose Abraham and the prophets to teach us His love and mercy, and to direct our hearts to Him. Finally He sent His Son to redeem us from the slavery of sin. His shameful death has brought us victory. Satan is tricked and defeated by Christ's death.

As St. Paul told the Romans, "All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. We were therefore buried with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. The death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives, He lives for God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus"!

The women went with fear and great joy to announce to the disciples

that Christ was risen. Can we also do the same? The Easter joy will be complete if we do away with the yoke of sin, and we do not allow sin to enslave us again.

Despite the fact that the apostles betrayed and deserted Him, His love for them never changed. It rather increased, so He called them brothers not friends.

How can I make this victory my own? How can I sustain this joy of Easter? How can I share this joy with others? How can I keep the Easter candle still burning? I have to determine to be faithful to God in everything I do, and do it well. The resurrection of Christ should give me the assurance that if I am willing to get closer to the Lord, He is prepared to receive me, no matter who I am and where I have been.