

2021 April 04

Easter Vigil in the Holy Night of Easter.

Reading:

First: Genesis 1.1-2.2, "And there was evening and there was morning, the first day" (5b)

The Psalm: 104, "You set the earth on its foundations" (5a)

Second: Genesis 22.1-18, "Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as burnt offering instead of his son" (13b)

The Psalm: 16, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices." (9)

Third: Exodus 14.15-31, 15.20, 1+., "The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the children of Israel.'" (25b)

The Psalm: Exodus 15, "The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name." (3)

Fourth: Isaiah 54.5-14, "For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great compassion I will gather you." (7)

The Psalm: 30, "Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones." (4)

Fifth: Isaiah 55.1-11, "And delight yourself in rich food." (2v)

The Psalm: Isaiah 12.2-6, "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." (2)

Sixth: Baruch 3.9-15, 32-4.4, "Learn where there is wisdom, where there is strength." (14)

The Psalm: 19, "The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever." (9a)

Seventh: Ezekiel 36.16-17a, 18.28, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean." (25)

The Psalm: 51, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation." (12a)

Epistle: Romans 6.3-11, "We know that our old self was crucified with him." (6a)

The Gospel: Mark 16.1-8, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" (3b)

Who will move the stone?

In the eight readings we have as part of keeping the Easter Vigil we have the gist of the salvation history. We have sections of the Messianic prophecies. We have many of the songs and canticles the people sung in the years of their waiting for the Messiah. Easter was the culmination and fulfillment of all prophecies. It was also the beginning of the fulfillment of the Prophecies of Jesus.

One big question the women, who were going to the tomb of Jesus had, 'who will move the tomb stone?' Peter and his companions too had a question, 'what next'? Did Mary, the mother of Jesus have any questions? In all probability she had many! The Prophecy of Simeon in the temple was fulfilled; the sword had pierced her heart! But that was neither the end nor the beginning. She had always questions in her heart all through her sojourn on earth. These questions of the women and of Mary the mother of Jesus did not deter them from proceeding to the very end of their search and, to their surprise, the tombstone was moved off.

Moving the stone is not our business; ours is just to move forward in spite of the possible obstacles ahead, with the firm conviction that he is there for you. And very often to our great surprise, before reaching there, the obstacles are moved. Through his Passion, death and resurrection Jesus has moved the obstacles on our way to heaven, inviting us to follow Him as he is leading us from the front. For Jesus, death and resurrection were the groundbreaking events. Through his death he conquered death and broken the bonds of sin. Through his resurrection he defined our destiny, designed by God. The faster we realize it and decide to proceed like the women running to the tomb, the easier we will reach our ultimate destiny.

Easter is not just an event that once happened. It is a continuous happening and an ongoing experience in our life. Easter is a testimony that affirms, 'We have seen him, we feel him in our life, and we have him present with us.' Our world is yearning to hear that testimony and

this is the only testimony that can give hope and salvation to this world, which is plagued day-by-day with more and more miseries. We need to join the race of Mary Magdalene after the rendezvous with her Rabbouni! (John 20:16) We must join her and them, the many that experienced it on the Easter day and after, and witness with them today confessing, “*We have seen him!*” Let us give the Easter experience to this world today. ***Peace be with you!***

Fr. George

(The readings of the day are given at the beginning. The numbers in parentheses refer to the quotes from them. Good to go through the readings beforehand to properly understand the Reflections)

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