

Great Vigil of the Resurrection

✠ 2010 ✠



Homily

In the Name JESUS. [Amen]

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! [He is Risen, indeed! Alleluia!]

What we have seen this past *Holy Week* – especially yesterday on that *Holy* and *Good* (for us) *Friday* – does not seem to be very powerful ... very glorious. It can make us wonder, perhaps, about the Kingdom of our God. Is this really a Kingdom I want to be in – where my God and King is so weak and powerless that He can be so easily rejected ... so easily despised ... so easily scorned and scourged ... even put to death by that most bloody and cruel death of the Cross? Our sinful flesh doesn't like to have anything to do with self-denial. Try to fast for a day ... or even just forego your favorite dish on your Birthday or a Holiday. In fact, the truth is, we often can't even manage to forego sin – especially our greatest weakness. Much less do we want unwarranted suffering ... for doing what is good and right. If I live a Godly life, will I also be so poorly treated by the world – maybe even betrayed by an acquaintance ... or denied by a close friend ... or rejected by loved ones – like my Lord was?

My flesh doesn't want to have anything to do with that sort of life – one of self-denial ... pain ... suffering ... loss ... rejection ... death. And so I readily close my eyes to sin in the world ... and sin in my own life. I readily close my ears to the blasphemies of the world and those around me – at work or at school – who deny the Lord and His work of Creation and Redemption. I am easily pressured to follow the sinful path of my peers – so that I can be accepted ... part of the group.

Yes, when we look at the events of *Holy Week* – and

what led up to it – we just don't see God's Kingdom and Power and Glory ... even though it was there ... hidden ... working mightily ... to bring us forgiveness, life, and salvation. But tonight we see it – as our Savior passes from death to life ... and crashes the gates of hell to declare that He has won the final victory over sin, death, and devil!

Appearances can be deceiving. Our Savior looked weak – but it was the strength of Self-denial ... based on His great love for us and His great desire that we should be saved. He looked like He had lost His Kingdom ... given it over to the world and the evil one – but in fact it was by that death on the Cross that He conquered! The cruel treatment epitomized by the crown of thorns seemed so inglorious – and yet it was precisely through His suffering and death that He Himself was glorified and at the same time glorified the Father's Holy Name and was coronated as our everlasting Lord and King! The Kingdom seems lost – but it is precisely in this that way the Kingdom of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit comes ... to the whole world ... and in particular to you and me that we *may be His own and live under Him in His Kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness ... just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity!*

It is most proper then, that at the end of the prayer our Lord has taught us we praise God, saying: *For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever and ever.*

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! [He is Risen, indeed! Alleluia!]

In the Name of the FATHER and of the ✠ SON and of the HOLY SPIRIT. [Amen]