

THE GREAT EASTER VIGIL

Did you hear?

It is to be sure the greatest story ever told!

Somehow ... somehow He got up!

I know not how. But I can tell you this: that what I believed happened and what in great faith and with great joy I proclaim tonight is ... that He somehow got up with life in Him again and the glory upon Him! And that is what all this is all about!

This is the night when death died and Jesus rose.

This is the night when death became laughable and life eternal.

This is the night when winter fades and spring blooms.

This is the night when our kindled flames and clouds of incense; our song of praise and lavish sprinkling with water; our Scriptures boldly told, and Eucharist lovingly broken and poured proclaim to the world: "The Lord is not here! He has been raised! He goes ahead of you! You have nothing to fear anymore!"

My dear friends, for two millennia and more, human history has done its best to deny Easter. The world at large, like the sorry soldiers guarding the tomb, tries to somehow deflect it, diffuse it, in one way or another to dispose of it. "That his disciples came during the night and stole Him while we were asleep" is still, as Matthew records, "the story that circulates to this day."

I for one believe that Easter is not so much threatened by those out there as it is by those of us in here – the believers – who like the first disciples sat and stewed by an empty tomb – AFRAID to show and tell the Good News of Easter!

Every day we call our own shots, play master of our house and lord of all we possess, we deny Easter and bury Christ again. Every time we turn a deaf ear and give the bum's rap to our neighbor, we deny Easter and bury Christ again.

**If he is no longer in the tomb and if He somehow got up, then, who can hurt us? What can kill us? Is there anything to fear anymore?
Now, that is what all this is all about!**

Easter is the wildest news that ever touched this crazy, mixed up world of ours.

**Easter says, yes! When everything else says, no!
Easter says, up! When everything else says, down!
Easter says, live! When everything else says, die!**

Easter!

Did you hear?

This is the night the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad!

Happy Easter! Buona Pasqua! Felices Pascuas! Wesolego Alleluja!