

### Easter Dawns



#### Easter and “Eastering”

Easter is a celebration of Jesus’ resurrection and what that means for all human beings and the whole of creation. It is an event which gives us hope; a time to remember that good is stronger than evil and death is not the end of life.

Catholicism, with most Christian faiths, teaches that Jesus returned as fully human and fully divine in a transformed body: able to walk through walls, eat, or vanish in an instant.

Most Christians believe that the entire Paschal drama (the Paschal Mystery) from Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday to Easter cannot be separated into parts. With Easter, creation was made fundamentally new in the here and now. This also means that the risen Christ manifested an existence that all will share in in the future Eschaton (the last days) — the reconciliation of all to God.

Because of the entire Paschal Mystery, the Holy Spirit and grace are understood as active in the day-to-day world, inviting and drawing people to God in very tangible ways. *(Easter, cont. on p.4)*

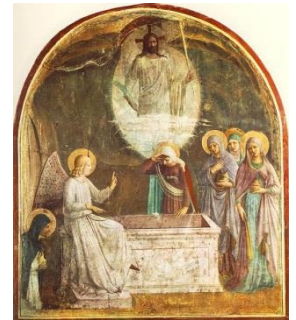


#### The Resurrection of Christ and Planet Earth

The Catholic Church and the broader world community are looking forward to Pope Francis’ forthcoming encyclical on the environment. Often Christians see the earth and all of creation as a motion picture studio back drop for God’s saving action in the Christ Event — the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus. However, there is more to our relationship with the Earth and with Christ than this approach suggests.

What we tend to overlook is that all of creation is the ongoing reality of God’s overflowing love. Nature is a major facet of God’s self-disclosure. Creation is God’s great art project, which the Holy One holds in existence. The Book of Genesis makes it clear that we are part of this great Divine creativity. Humanity is taken from the earth and given life through the Divine breath.

The Christ Event is God’s very immersion into creation. The Divine Word, God’s highest and most complete God Self disclosure, becomes truly human and remains truly divine in Jesus of Nazareth. God’s irruption into human history is part and parcel of the divine irruption *(Earth, cont. on p.3)*



#### Velaron, salieron y entraron en el misterio

Papa Francisco, en su homilía para la Vigilia Pascual, reflexionó sobre la experiencia de los primeros discípulos y discípulas del Señor, en esa noche de dolor y de temor antes de la resurrección . Notó que el Señor no duerme, sino «vela el guardián de su pueblo» (Sal 121,4) y lo salva de la esclavitud, abriendo el camino a la libertad. Así como velaba y cuidaba a su pueblo Israel en Egipto, velaba e hizo «pasar a Jesús a través del abismo de la muerte y de los infiernos.»

Los discípulos se quedaron en el Cenáculo, el salón en donde celebraron con Jesús la Última Cena, cuando nació el alba, pero las discípulas salieron con sus ungüentos para unguir al cuerpo de su amigo fallecido. Se preocuparon por el detalle de la piedra, pero sin embargo salieron para enfrentarlo y atender a su amigo.

*(Velaron sigue en la página 4)*

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## ASK THEOLOGIKA

NOT SO COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Dear Theologika,

What does it mean that “every time we eat His body and drink His blood we proclaim His death?”

*I thought He was Alive*

Dear Alive,

St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 11, from whence we get the saying, is teaching about the Eucharist and what the Eucharistic celebration (Mass) is all about. He is teaching the Christians in Corinth that the Eucharist is not only the “memory” of the past but is a memorial in the Jewish sense (*Anamnesis* is the Greek word) which is to remember and thus make it present. Think of the Passover descriptions from the Old Testament: “When your children ask you why do we do this?” It is not just that we are remembering something from the past but we are becoming a part of it. Christ, self-sacrificed and broken for us on the cross, is present in the Eucharist. When we come to the Eucharist we are proclaiming his death and resurrection. We hear, “The Body of Christ” (the one who suffered, died, and was buried and

on the third day rose again) and we say, “Amen!”

Paul’s main point in this passage is to recognize that the Body of Christ is present both in the Eucharistic Species and in the Mystical Body of our brothers and sisters. If we don’t stand before Jesus Crucified (in both the Host and our Brethren) in a worthy manner, watch out. That’s not what we’re all about as Catholics (Christians).

The Mass is the re-presentation of the Lord’s death and resurrection. It is the one sacrifice, once and for all, made present. It is the bloody sacrifice of Jesus, poured out for all, presented now in an unbloody manner. Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Take and drink, this is the blood of the covenant — new and eternal.

I hope that is helpful. Now here’s a fun fact for you that was a new idea for me. Holy Week starts on Palm Sunday (Hosanna!) and the Eucharistic prayer starts with Hosanna! It then moves to the Last Supper, which takes us to Good Friday and on to Easter Vigil. We do this all because of the Resurrection, through the Spirit that was given by Jesus to us. It’s the whole Paschal Mystery! Hurray! Alleluia!

Blessings,

**Fr. David Jaspers and Theologika**



Eucharistic Bread – Early Christian Art



### They kept watch, went forth, and entered into the Mystery Pope Francis

In his Easter Vigil homily, Pope Francis spoke of the experience of the first disciples, both men and women, during that night of pain and fear before the resurrection. He notes that “The Lord is not sleeping; the Watchman is watching over his people” (Ps 121:4), saving them from slavery and opening the path to freedom. Just as he cared for Israel in the past, he also brought “Jesus through the abyss of death.”

The men remained in the upper room the next morning, but the women ventured out at dawn to anoint Jesus’ body. They worried about how the stone over the tomb’s entrance would be moved, but they found it rolled back and the tomb open. They entered the tomb and found that he had risen.

In the act of going back out into the world and entering its pain, the women entered into the mystery of the power and love of the Lord. “‘To enter into the mystery’ means ... to listen to the silence and hear the tiny whisper amid great silence by which God speaks to us.”

We are called to leave behind all that closes us in and go beyond our comfort zone. With Mary the mother of Jesus and the women who had waited with her, may we also go forth and enter into the Mystery.

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## The Easter Proclamation and the Identity of the Deacon



Deacon William Ditewig, PhD explains the role of the Deacon in singing the Easter Proclamation in his

recent post, “Christ, Cross, Candle, and Gospel”. In this post, he traces the history of the Easter Vigil liturgy and the role of the deacon in the lighting of the Paschal candle. He also notes the deacon’s role in the proclamation of the Light of Christ.

From the earliest times of the Church, the bishop was likened to God the Father, the presbyters (elders, priests) were viewed as the apostles, and the deacon was the *Alter Christus* (Another Christ). In fulfilling this calling, the deacon proclaimed the Gospel and provided for the sick and needy in mind, body, and spirit.

The blessing and lighting of the Easter Candle and the proclamation of God’s saving power symbolize the deacon as Christ carrying the cross, which is now transformed into the glorious light of salvation, dispelling the gloom and bringing new life and vision into the world.

*“Exult, Let them exult, the hosts of heaven.”*

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(Earth, cont. from p. 1)  
to bring all creation to fulfillment in Christ, according to St. Paul and the ancient tradition of the Church. The ongoing Christ Event sweeps us and all of the cosmos toward creation’s fulfillment in Christ, the Omega point.

The Second Vatican Council, in its key documents, the *Church and the Modern World* (*Gaudium et Spes* – Joy and Hope) and *The Light of Nations* (*Lumen Gentium*), affirms the centrality of God’s action in human society and creation and our need to participate in this saving activity. Social and political oppression go hand in hand with the destruction of the environment and the human life-support system, resulting in poverty, war, and ignorance and the degradation of humanity.



As the Council Fathers wrote:  
*“Therefore, the council focuses its attention on the*

*world of men, the whole human family along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which it lives; that world which is the theater of man’s history, and the heir of his energies, his tragedies and his triumphs; that world which the Christian sees as created and sustained by its Maker’s love, fallen indeed into the bondage of sin, yet emancipated now by Christ, Who was crucified and rose again to break the strangle hold of personified evil, so that the world might be fashioned anew according to God’s design and reach its fulfillment.”* – *Gaudium et Spes* #2 (emphasis added.)

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## Martyrs Continue to Witness

From the earliest days of Christianity, before Jesus’ followers were even known as Christians, men and women have been called upon to testify to what they have seen and experienced of God’s great love for all of us as it shines forth in the life, death and resurrection of Our Lord. We call those who witness with the total gift of their lives martyrs.

Today is no different. The martyrs of Libya and those who are dying in other countries around the world because they are Christians are a reminder that love and faith are risky. We pray for those who face this risk, that they may testify with courage and know the Father’s love in their hour of trial. And we pray that they will remember us when they meet our Lord.

### Help for those left behind

As members of the wider community of faith, we may also feel called to make some offering of deeper support to the families of these martyrs.

Programs offering aid to poor families in Egypt and the Middle East include:

**Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CWNEA):** sponsored by the Vatican.

**Tony Rezk:** whose art is featured above, offers prints of this icon through his website to help fund aid.

**Coptic Orphans:** (working in Egypt)  
**Gather the Remnants:** (in Egypt)



*(Velaron, sigue desde la pág. 1)*

En su acción de salir de nuevo al mundo y entrar en su dolor, entraron al misterio del poder y amor del Señor, según el Papa. La tumba estaba abierta. ¡Su amigo se había resucitado! Las discípulas habían «entrado en el misterio» (1Re 19,12) en el cual se puede «escuchar el silencio y sentir el susurro de ese hilo de silencio sonoro en el que Dios nos habla.»

Nuestro Señor nos llama a todos a salir de lo que nos encierre, del miedo, de la incertidumbre, para

enfrentar los temores, los problemas, los interrogantes y «entrar en el misterio ... más allá de las cómodas certezas ...»

Las mujeres discípulas de Jesús, junto con su Madre, pasaban la noche velando. Y luego, en la mañana, «salieron y encontraron la tumba abierta ... Velaron, salieron y entraron en el misterio.»

Papa Francisco nos invita a «velar con Dios y con María, nuestra Madre, para entrar en el misterio que nos hace pasar de la muerte a la vida.»

*¡Aleluya, Aleluya!*

*(Easter, cont. from p. 1)*

What Jesus did at the Last Supper was to place himself as a unique offering of love to the Father, an offering that is shared by us. His self-giving and adoration, and their rejection by those in power, became a historical event on the cross the next day. But, out of the sacrifice of his life came the triumph of God over death and sin for all humanity. No evil or tragedy is beyond the reach of God's love and redemption. Easter is the absolute promise that the human condition and the way the world currently is is not a meaningless lonely journey to oblivion. Jesus "Easters" us every day when we let his love and guidance into our hearts and our lives as we struggle with our crosses of loss, hurt, or disordered living. We live Easter here and now imperfectly, but this Easter will be fully realized in the future in the Kingdom of God.

*Susan T. Mahan, PhD*

**Easter**

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P	M	O	R	E	A	S	T	E	R	S	C	I	V	W	E	H	N	U	A
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M	W	N	G	H	H	S	A	F	R	Q	W	U	O	U	R	I	Y	Z	S
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P	O	U	I	T	Y	E	V	Y	S	E	R	W	A	G	E	S	H	V	B
T	M	Y	S	T	I	C	A	L	B	O	D	Y	C	V	R	Y	E	U	K

Word Search: Find the words in bold type!

On **Easter** Sunday we celebrate Jesus' **Resurrection** from the dead. This feast follows three special days of prayer known as the **Triduum**. Holy week begins with **Palm Sunday** when we sing **Hosanna** with the people of Jerusalem who welcomed Jesus as he rode a donkey into their city. It was the time of the Jewish feast of **Passover**, when they remembered how God saved them from slavery in Egypt. We call Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection the Paschal **Mystery** because of the wondrous way he passed over from death to new life. Through this mystery, all of **creation** also is reborn to a new life.

On Holy Saturday evening, we celebrate the Easter **Vigil**. A special **candle** is lit from a newly lit fire and carried into the church building. The **deacon** sings a song known as the **Exsultet** in honor of the **Paschal** candle that shines to remind us of the light of Christ. The deacon is known as an **Alter Christus** because his vocation is to proclaim the good news, care for the poor, and bring the needs of the vulnerable to the attention of the community. We gather as the **Mystical Body** of Christ to celebrate Eucharist. At Easter Vigil, we sing **Alleluia** to express our joy and praise of God.

The blessing of new life in Easter is for now and for the future. We experience it imperfectly now. In the last days, the **Eschaton**, we will know it as Jesus knows it already. The saints and those who have died as witnesses to the faith, called **martyrs**, join in our celebration of Easter and new life.

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**Praying with Pope Francis**

*General Intention:* That people may respect creation and care for it as a gift of God.

*Evangelization:* That persecuted Christians may feel the consoling presence of the Risen Lord and the solidarity of all the Church.

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