

Easter Vigil in the Holy Night
April 4, 2015

The angel said, "He has been raised, he is not hear." These words of the angel from the Gospel of Mark summarize why we're here tonight. The vigil Mass is considered to be the first Easter Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord. We're here tonight to participate in the mystery of the Holy Mass with joy and praises in commemoration of the glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

And we are also here to celebrate the mystery of salvation by becoming witnesses to the extraordinary power of the Sacraments of Initiation, Baptism, Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist that our candidates and elect will soon experience.

The long series of readings we have heard proclaimed this evening are an invitation for each of us to listen attentively and to remind ourselves that of the way in which God has saved His people throughout history and how He in the fullness of time sent His own Son to be our Redeemer.

And as we are baptized into Christ and become ourselves sons and daughters of God, the story of salvation history is our story too!

The First Reading from the Book of Genesis indicated that everything that God had made was very good. Seven times, we heard, "And God saw that it was good." If God saw that it was good seven times, surely, His creations must be very good, all of it serving a purpose in His Divine progressive plan.

The Second Reading reminded us of the event when Abraham obeyed God's command to go and sacrifice his only son Isaac whom he loved. This was a real test of

faith for Abraham. Because he obeyed the Lord, at the last minute, the life of his son was spared. In compensation, the Lord promised to Abraham that He would make his descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore and by his offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessings for themselves.

The Third Reading from the Book of Exodus reminded us of the event when the Lord God freed the children of Israel from the Egyptian slavery. This event was a picture of what was to come, that through our faith in Jesus and the Sacrament of Baptism, we would be freed from the slavery of sin.

The two readings from the prophet Isaiah recounted the promise of the Lord God to have compassion for us, that He would be our Redeemer. It was a promise from the Lord that if we came to Him, we would live and He would make an everlasting covenant with us.

The Sixth Reading, from the Baruch, reminds us to walk in the way of God so we may live in peace forever. We're told that wisdom is the Commandments of God, the law that endures forever. All who live righteously by obeying the commands of God will live.

The Reading from the prophet Ezekiel contained God's promise to sprinkle clean water upon us. He promised to put within us a new heart and a new spirit. Over and above this, He promised to place within us His indwelling Spirit to help us obey His commandments.

The Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans reminds us that through the Sacrament of Baptism, we died with Christ, we were buried with Him, and we have

been raised with Him so that we may walk in the newness of life.

The final reading from the Gospel of Mark recounts the event surrounding the glorious Resurrection of the Lord Jesus. When Mary Magdalene, Salome and the other Mary went to see the tomb early on that Sunday morning, they were greeted by an angel who told them that Jesus had been raised. Accordingly, the women should go and announce the good news to the disciples, telling them to go to Galilee where they will see Jesus again.

And as each of us approach the altar of the Eucharist tonight, may we take to heart the Good News we have heard so that our lives may be transformed so as to reflect the glory of this Holy Night. May the Most Holy Name of Jesus be praised forever!