

## Pastor's Corner - Easter 2011

At the beginning of this Holy Week on Passion (Palm) Sunday the Word of God proclaimed that Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem from the east and like the sun bringing a new day, Jesus brought a new way of seeing to the people of the world. Our celebration reminded us that Jesus enters our city, all those areas and all those actions of our world that are opposed to God.

**This week's celebrations reminded us that God cares, that God is not indifferent to our human condition, that God wants to be with us in our suffering, in our difficulties, even in our sins.** At the beginning of Lent we had written all these on the pieces of paper which we had stuck on the cross in the centre of the church. God heard our cries for help and has entered our "city", our lives, our places of defeat and pain. **The burning of the pieces of paper at the Easter Vigil symbolizes for us that God in Jesus conquers all evil, triumphs over our own sins, triumphs over the sins of humankind.**

When Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem it seemed that he would be defeated by the powers of evil and that in death he was a loser. Already last Sunday the Word proclaimed announced that Jesus would not be a loser despite his suffering and death, and that he would triumph. We too must enter those places and events in our lives where we seem to be the losers, all those places and events where we are asked to take up the cross, the crosses of our own life.

**Our celebrations this Holy Week have assured us that we are not alone that Jesus walks with us as we confront fear and uncertainty, evil and suffering, and that we will triumph with Jesus, the Risen one.**

God in Jesus has entered our life and God in Jesus has personally confronted evil in order to transform that evil, those defeats and pains of ours.

Today's celebration of Easter in many ways continues to underline both these aspects.

**The Gospel readings talk of disciples and we looking with fear into tombs, the signs of pain and death still around us. We wonder whether we will ever get beyond all these. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus we may be burdened by illness, by enormous losses, the loss of a loved one, the crushing of a dream, the betrayal by another. We may see ourselves as locked in a tomb unable to free ourselves, unable to roll away the stones of death (violence, corruption, sexism, oppression, hopelessness, disappointment). Jesus' resurrection tells us that God is with us to help us roll away the stones, that God is there to help us discover life in the midst of the experience of death.** We are called to move away the stones from the tombs of our world, to undo all the acts, words, and thoughts of violence and hatred that are our world. **We know this is possible because God does the impossible and with God we can do the impossible.**

Today's readings also tell us that we need to "see and believe", to see in a different way, that we need to remember the Scriptures that remind us that "the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, to be crucified, and on the third day rise again (Luke 24)." We need to be reminded by the witness of the "other disciple", of another believer, of each other, of our community whose faith is there to sustain us. **We cannot sustain our belief, our hope on our own; we need each other to strengthen our conviction that all we believe will come true some day. We need to come together on Sundays to be reminded by others of the depth of God's love for us and of the triumph of that love over all evil. I need the witness of faith of the person next to me. I need to remember the faith of those countless witnesses through history who have shown me that God does the impossible. And it is because I am surrounded by these other witnesses that I can be truly happy, that I can live life to the full despite the difficulties and cares of my daily life.**

That happiness is fulfilled when I am sustained by the witness of my neighbour and when I in turn witness to others. The Triduum celebrations reminded me that, following the example of Jesus, such witness includes service to others, the willingness to be a voluntary pain bearer, and the willingness to forgive and to accept the forgiveness of others.

**May the celebration of Easter bring you that true joy and peace.**

Happy Easter - Shalom  
Fr. Rolf

*fr. Rolf*