

Easter 2A 2014

What a difference a week makes! Last week there was standing room only in our church; and this week we are back to normal. So what difference does Easter make? Does it make any difference at all, or is Easter just a rite of spring, another day to mark the end of winter?

Easter made a great deal of difference to Jesus' first followers, and it surely makes a great deal of difference to you who faithfully celebrate this Eucharist week after week. For example, in today's first reading we are told that those who first believed in the resurrection devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles, to the communal life, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. And then, in today's second reading, Saint Peter reminds us that through Christ's resurrection we have been given a new birth to a living hope for an imperishable inheritance.

There were four things that characterized the life of the first believers. *First*, they devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles who had seen the risen Lord. Listening and learning from the apostles, they grew into the life of Jesus' resurrection. *Second*, they became a community of believers by devoting themselves to each other. They understood that the risen Lord created them as community filled with the power of his resurrection life. *Third*, they devoted themselves to the breaking of the bread, the Eucharist, in which they encountered their risen Lord. *Finally*, they devoted themselves to a deep prayer life that fostered

by their new faith in the resurrection of Christ. They praised God continually for the grace and mercy he had shown in Jesus' resurrection.

Like the early church, we grow in the life of the resurrection if we devote ourselves to studying the scriptures, to living more deeply as a community of believers, to celebrating more devotedly the Eucharist, and to devoting ourselves more fervently in prayer in the risen Christ.

Here are some concrete things that we can do as a community this Easter season to deepen our life in Christ's resurrection. *First*, like the early church we can devote ourselves to the teaching of the Apostles by reading the Acts of the Apostles in order to learn how the early church grew in its resurrection faith. *Second*, we can devote ourselves to our live in community by becoming more actively involved in the life of our parish, thereby deepening our sense of community life in Christ. *Third*, we can participate in the breaking of the bread, the Eucharist, not out of a sense of obligation, but as a way of meeting and encountering the risen Lord. *Finally*, we can devote ourselves to more forever prayer every day by praising God for the resurrection we already enjoy in Christ.

What difference does Easter make? It makes all the difference. Easter changes and transformed; it gives us new life in Christ. But if we are to grow in this life we must nurture this life every day.