

Holy Saturday

They were saying to one another, "Who will roll back the stone for us?"

The question that the women asked that Easter morning is the question we are always asking in the face of evil and distress. The people of Israel asked this question when they stood at the edge of the Red Sea with the fearsome chariots of Pharaoh pursuing them: who will save us from the power of Pharaoh? They asked the same question time and time again as they travelled through the wilderness in search of the Promised Land: who will provide us with food? Who will provide us with water? Who will save us from our enemies? And they asked it yet again when they found themselves exiled in a foreign land: who will free us from our captors? Who will restore our land? It is the same question we ask throughout our lives: who will free us from the power of sin. Who will free us from sickness and ill health? Who will free us from the power of death?

But today, at this Easter Vigil, the Day the Lord made, we know the answer to these questions. There is no stone large enough to keep the Son of God from rising from the dead. There is no stone strong enough to confine the crucified Christ to the throes of death. There is no stone powerful enough to prevent God from breaking the power of Sin and Death and restoring us to life.

The women came to the tomb to anoint the corpse of the crucified Jesus, but God had already pronounced judgment on those who had judged his Son. The

women came to the tomb to complete the Jewish rites of burial, but God had already raised his Son to new life. The women came asking who would remove the stone from the tomb, but God had already removed it.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is an act of God. It is not something we or any human being could do. It is an act of God; it is a new creation. Just as God created the heavens and the earth, so God created the life of his Son anew by raising him from the dead. Jesus did not return to his old way of life; he entered into the fullness of life. By the resurrection, he entered in God's own life. He entered into God's new creation; and where he has gone, we will follow, provided we walk with him in the way of discipleship.

On this most holy night, on this third and greatest day of the Sacred Triduum, we know the answer to the women's question. And because we know the answer to that question, we know the purpose of our life. It is God who rolled away the stone; it is God who continues to roll away the stones of hatred, persecution, suffering, sin, and yes, death itself. For, there is nothing that can oppose the power of God who raises the dead. There is nothing that God, who raises the dead, cannot do. There is nothing we need fear because God has and will continue to roll away the stone.