

## Easter Dawn A (4/24/11 – *The Resurrection of Christ Avails*)

In the Name of JESUS. [Amen]

The resurrection of Christ is of no avail to you unless Christ also rises in your soul. Just as Christ should be conceived in you, born in you, and live in you, so likewise ought He to arise in you. Death precedes every resurrection, for one cannot rise again who has not first died. So it is with respect to your spiritual resurrection. Christ will not arise in you unless the old Adam – your sinful flesh – first die in you. The newness of the Spirit will not appear until the oldness of the flesh disappears.

Nor is it enough that Christ should arise in your soul but once; for the old Adam cannot be destroyed in a single moment. The old sinful nature strives daily to live in you anew. Daily you must drown and destroy it, that **Christ** may daily live in you anew. Christ did not ascend to heaven or enter into His glory until after His resurrection from death [LK 24.26]. Likewise, you will not enter into the heavenly glory until Christ first rises and lives in you.

The Savior arose from death at *the rising of the sun* [MK 16.2], and so if Christ arise in you, the light of the saving knowledge of God will arise in your soul. But how can there be such light where the gross darkness of sin still reigns? And if one be utterly destitute of the light of the knowledge of God in this life, how can he be a partaker of God's eternal light in the life that is to come? Only the children of light pass over into the glories of eternal light, while the children of darkness pass into the awful gloom of everlasting darkness.

Christ in His resurrection triumphed over death, and so

the soul in whom Christ spiritually rises also will pass from death to life [JN 5.24]. Nor can you be overcome by death, since Christ, the Death of death, lives in you. Christ by His resurrection brought in perfect and *everlasting righteousness* [DAN 9.24]. As Holy Scripture says: *He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification* [ROM 4.25]. You in whom Christ spiritually rises are justified from sin; for how can sin find place where Christ's perfect righteousness blooms in that life? And that righteousness has been made yours through Holy Baptism and faith. Our Lord Jesus Christ by His glorious resurrection has robbed satan of his victory over us. By His descent into hell, Christ destroyed satan's kingdom, spoiled that strong man's palace, and shattered in pieces the armor in which he trusted [LK 11.22]. Thus satan can nevermore prevail over those in whom Christ rises spiritually, for those in whom the Conqueror of satan lives **cannot** be conquered by satan.

When Christ arose from the dead, angels from heaven sat within the tomb [JN 20.12]. If Christ is spiritually risen in you, you also will rejoice in the companionship of angels. Where the old Adam still lives and rules, there satan delights to dwell; but where Christ lives and reigns, there the holy angels love to abide. For it is written that *there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents* [LK 15.10].

After His resurrection Christ appeared to His disciples and showed Himself alive in the flesh to them [LK 24.15; 1COR 15.5-8]. A man is pronounced dead if he fails to show the signs and deeds of life. If you have become a partaker of Christ's resurrection through Baptism and

faith, show yourself a living member of His body by your deeds of love and charity to the neighbor. When the soul is possessed by Christ, the Holy Spirit takes up residence and leads that soul to every good; for those *who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God* [ROM 8.14]. *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit* [GAL 5.25].

The sun scatters the splendor of its beams on every side; likewise, the light of faith diffuses itself in glowing deeds of love on every hand. We can separate works of love to our neighbor from faith in God just as little as we can take away light from the sun. Our sins are dead works [HEB 9.14]; and if you walk in dead works, how can you possibly be living in Christ and Christ in you?

Raise us up, O blessed Jesus, from the awful death of sin, that we may henceforth walk in newness of life with You. We have been baptized into Your death and resurrection [ROM 6]. May Your death, O Christ, put to death the old sinful flesh in us, and may Your resurrection call into new life our inward, spiritual being! May Your precious Blood cleanse us from all our sins, and may Your resurrection clothe us as in the radiant robe of Your righteousness! O True Life, we – who have been dead in sin – most ardently yearn for You. O True and Only Righteousness, we – who have so foolishly wandered away from You through our sins – turn with longing hearts to You. O True Salvation, we – who ought be condemned to eternal death for our sins – look with eager souls to You. Make us truly alive by Your Spirit ... justify us by Your grace ... and save us for Your mercy's sake – that we may behold Your face at the glorious Resurrection on the Last Day!

In the Name of the FATHER and of the ✠ SON and of the HOLY SPIRIT. [Amen]