

Easter Sunday

April 24, 2011

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Can you read this Easter card OK? Good! It's a tomb, with a big stone sealing the opening; off to the side the Easter Bunny.

Second panel is a rumbling as the stone is moved away, with Bunny getting a little nervous. Third panel is the Easter Bunny squashed beneath the stone that has rolled away from the tomb of Jesus.

On the inside, the card says "Easter...it's not about a bunny." And on the bottom is a little drawing of Jesus, holding the bunny and saying "you're healed." And the bunny says "Thanks! Welcome Back"

Easter. It's not about a bunny. Well, then, what is Easter about? We could ask that in another way, "What am I doing here this morning? What do I actually believe?"

Well, here's what I believe. I have given my life to the following two sentences: There is some reality that we call God, (beyond our words, beyond our minds), who created the universe (from atoms to galaxies), and continues to hold the world in being. 2000 years ago, in what is now Israel, God came to earth and became a human person named Jesus. Jesus was God's response to human evil. On Good Friday, the world tried to exterminate God, crucifying Jesus, but

by Sunday morning, the tomb was empty, and Jesus, once again alive, began to appear; he appeared many times to many people. Eventually, those stopped, but the believers felt a new presence of God: namely the Holy Spirit whom Jesus had promised to send.

And the early church would gather to break the Bread and drink the Cup, and they realized that the Risen Jesus was in their midst: the bread and wine had become Jesus. And when the believers were sick, they would pray for one another and anoint one another with oil, and Jesus would be there too, and they would get better.

Jesus had obviously survived death, but what about them? At the time of Jesus, 25% of babies died at birth; 60% were dead by the age of 16; only 5% of people lived to the age of 30.

Archeologists have unearthed the tombstones of early Christians; on them is inscribed "born into eternity." Roman tombstones have also been found: they say "gone forever." We are immortal. We are not living for this world only. Thank God for that.

What brings you here this morning? What do you believe? Can we expect perhaps to meet the Risen Christ at this Mass?

Because, it's not about the bunny.