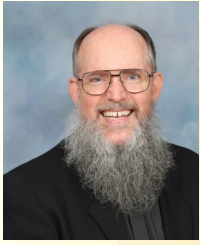


Easter Vigil Homily Rerun: April 15, 2017 - Fr. Bill

The Vigil: "The Reckless & Unbalanced Love of God – Amen! Come Lord Jesus!" - Fr Bill



In Genesis 1:1-2:2 God saw that it was good until the 6th day when He made us and saw that it was very good. We rejoin, "Lord, send out Your Spirit" in the hope that we can see this same goodness and live accordingly.

In Genesis 22:1-18 God provides the sacrifice for our sins foreshadowing the death and resurrection of Jesus, His only begotten Son. We respond, "Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices."

In Exodus 14:15-15:1 we arrive at the Red Sea where God makes a way where there is no way as He defeats the power of sin and evil. This prepares us to believe that Jesus is The Way. We respond with Miriam, "Horse and chariot He has cast into the sea" knowing that sin is the horsepower of the chariots of

evil and death.

In Isaiah 54:5-14 God professes His reckless, unfathomable, passionate, unbalanced spousal love FOR US – YOU & ME. To this plea from a jilted but faithful lover we respond, "Lord, You have rescued me."

Isaiah 55:1-11 follows with an advertisement for God and His grace. It could be an ad for a tent revival: Amen, brothers & sisters: come and receive for free; "Seek the Lord Who is generous in forgiving." To which we responded with the silence to give our own 'amen' or simply pray "God indeed is my Savior."

In Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4 God offers wisdom in a gentle and loving rebuke. It's as though Grandpa God, with a long white beard and a cane, comes to visit His favorite grandchild you or me in the prison of sin hoping to encourage us to a new and better life. If we listen with an open heart we respond with God's people of the Old Testament "The Law of the Lord is perfect."

Then in Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28 we are told that because of His steadfast love for us God will cleanse us and transplant into us new, truly human hearts. We respond "Athirst is my soul for God, the living God" reminiscent of St. Augustine's 'cry of recognition,' "Our hearts are restless until they rest in You, O Lord."

At this point singing "Glory to God in the highest" seems a rather serious understatement of the response in our hearts.

When we get to the epistle (Romans 6:3-11) St. Paul instructs us that in the in the waters of baptism we die with Christ so that we rise from those waters in full possession of the life of the risen Christ. We respond with a feast of alleluias to celebrate the end of the alleluia drought of Lent: "Alleluia. The right hand of the Lord has struck with power."

By the time we get to the Vigil Gospel (Matthew 28:1-10) we think that it just can't get any better until we hear the basic message of Jesus: "Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." No response improves on that which we use at the end of every liturgical proclamation of any gospel passage: "Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ."

The rest of the Mass of the Vigil of Easter can be understood in the words of Revelation 22:20b: "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!"