

Holy Saturday

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Tonight we celebrate that our tears of sadness have been transformed into tears of joy!

The tomb is empty! Jesus is not there! Alleluia!

On these holy 3 days, we have been following the water – from the last supper when Jesus washed the disciples’ feet, to last night as our tears of sorrow at Jesus’ crucifixion flowed from our eyes, and on into tonight to the waters of baptism and tears of joy.

Tonight we remember that all water is tied together – the water of service, the tears of lament and joy, and the waters of baptism. Service, lament, joy, and baptism are all the same water.

This is the river that runs throughout God’s story and through us as well making us one with God’s story.

Tonight is our big baptismal celebration. Tonight we remember that in our baptisms we are joined into Jesus’ death and resurrection. We are joined as one with Jesus making all of the water that Jesus has ever touched our water of refreshment.

Water is holy, because water was the first thing God created and it is the one thing that can never be destroyed. It can transform from solid, to liquid, to gas, but it will never leave us, just like God will never leave us.

It also makes up 60% of our body and we have to constantly replenish that water by drinking a lot of water each day. It’s recommended we each drink between 12 and 16 cups per day.

Without water, we die. Water is life, and with the waters of baptism we are constantly assured of our eternal life with God. Water is life giving. Jesus’ death and resurrection is eternal life giving, and in baptism we are joined as one into that saving act of God’s with water.

In the early church, the Easter Vigil was held so that those who were to be baptized could be baptized just as the sun was rising, symbolically joining baptism with the sun/son’s rising.

In excitement for baptism, the community would stay up all night remembering God's long story of love and mercy so that the remembering of God's ultimate act of love and mercy, as known in Jesus' resurrection, could coincide with sunrise.

Tonight we will not be going that long. Instead we remember that Jesus was risen in the darkness. When Mary Magdalene showed up at the tomb in the dark, the stone was already moved away and Jesus was not inside.

It was in the darkness that Jesus was brought back to life, and so in the darkness we proclaim that Jesus Christ is the light of the world. The light no darkness can overcome. Life is stronger than death! Alleluia!

And then we remember the promises given to us in our baptism. God loves us unconditionally. God will never leave us. And, God is sending us out into the world to share that good news with others – all others – everyone we meet.

Walking wet from the baptismal waters, we are sent to carry the good news of Jesus' resurrection and bring others into God's wide open embrace of love by showering them with God's life giving water. There is plenty to go around!

Last year I got this mug on the clearance rack after Easter. "Easter Peeps, we're all the same on the inside." I love this mug. It's a good reminder that were all the same on the inside, and filled with water it reminds me how we are mostly made of water, the same water that gets recycled over and over again across the face of the earth, the same water that is used in baptism.

Water joins us all together – on the inside and the out.

Tonight we come to the culmination of all holy water. The holy water that Jesus washes the disciples' feet with in humble service. The holy water that falls from our eyes in sadness and joy. The holy water used in baptism that unites us with Jesus and all Christians all over the world. It is the same holy water that sends us out to do God's mission for the world. To bring life and light into the darkest of places.

Service, lament, joy, baptism – they are all united in water. The very same water that gives life to us and to all of creation.

Water ties everything together, and water ties all of us together.

Jesus Christ is the light and the life of the whole world!

He is the fountain of living water.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Thanks be to God. Amen