

Remember thou art dust and unto dust thou shall return.....

From St Paul' first letter to the Corinthians:

Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied.

I Corinthians 15:12-19

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost +

We are dust and the empirical proof of death surrounds us. Psychologists will tell us that as part of our maturing process as we move away from childhood is in part that moment when we recognize that death exists. But what is death..... and who are we to know of the nature of death and of the God who created us. No other creature in all creation has this knowledge. Only man is created in the image of God.

And yet when we look around us in our culture today or in any culture at any time there are those who say that there is no Resurrection through Christ Jesus. Rather, they look in other places to fill their very human need to explain what they know in their hearts, but cannot understand.

When the first of the ancient men died and his family or tribe gathered around him for a burial ritual the quest had begun. Red ochre was put on his cheeks to imitate life, his tools, food and ornaments were buried with him..... Why, because the heart of man knows that his soul is immortal and that one day body, soul and spirit will be reunited. For the ancients it was not the conscious thought of a theological construction rather it was the naked, raw instinct that man was different from the animals.

The rituals evolved and the myths grew. Our need to explain that feeling in our hearts; that something about us was very different grew. The mystery religions were born, probably in Egypt. They focused on the ritual dying and rising that they instinctively knew was man destiny.

And then in a moment of time, God entered into His Created Order.

Last night during the Great Vigil of Easter we read of the mighty works of God and His sharing life with us so that we could understand and believe. And in this most Holy Week we remember the Sacrifice that saves us and sets us free. For those who call themselves Christian the final questions have been answered, we need no longer wander in ignorance of the truth of our nature or of the Love of God for us.

And yet in this culture..... in every culture as far into history as we can remember, there have been those who have followed the cleverly devised myths. I look at the rise in popularity fantasy literature and media about the worship of nature, vampires, and those mediums who propose to speak to the dead. And I note the decline in those who practice the Christian Faith around the world.

And there are the more intellectual who place their faith in the more scientific explanation of life either being a statistical accident or here being an extraterrestrial origin of life. None of this is new and yet in every generation there are those who are attracted to these myths

People dismiss the rise in popularity of these ancient myths, nature worship or even the embracing of a belief in eternal life through some other form than the promised life to come than through Jesus Christ. These are the people of whom St. Paul speaks. They reject the Resurrection as anything other than another myth.....another story.

St. Augustine said "Our hearts are restless until they rest in thee". This restlessness is the knowledge of our nature that I speak of today that is in the being of all men. We know we were created not only for this place and time, but that there is more to life.

I suppose we could dismiss the actions of our sisters and brothers (That is their reject of faith in Christ Jesus and His power to save) if it were not for the Lord's Commandment that we love one another. We are not demonstrating that Christian Love when we leave so many people ignorant of the truth.

There is a very disturbing trend in this country and around the world. As people have embraced again the ignorance and darkness they, their families and children have grown to see Christianity as irrelevant or just as superstitious as any other belief.

They have moved away from the church and now place their faith in science, one of the ancient myths or they simply pretend that they are not like other men. Others may be dust and will return to dust, but not them. They are to be the most pitied of men, for eternal life is being offered to them. The Love of God is present and ready to fill their lives, but they are too busy or to ignorant to understand.

The solution is that we, each of us have the responsibility to love another into the Kingdom of God. We need to proclaim with our lips and our lives the truth of what we believe. Each of us needs to be light and leaven to the world. We like Jesus and the disciples need to move from the empty tomb into the world to proclaim the Truth and the Joy. We have what they seek if only we can get their attention and that will only be done when one person shares their faith with another.

We began the season of Lent with the dust to remind us of our human natures. Today, we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord which confirms for us the eternal nature of our being, created to be forever with God our Father.

St. Paul finishes his thoughts as he concludes that portion of the Letter to the Corinthians concerning Resurrection this way:

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

I Corinthians 15:20-22

This is what we believe and it is what we are to proclaim to the world.

Alleluia, the Lord is Risen,

He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

AMEN

