

## **He Vas Krazy -- Easter C**

Christos Anesti -- Christ is risen! Alethos Anesti – The Lord is risen indeed! That is the exchange you will hear on Easter morning among Christians in the East. Although everyone knows what it's about, they keep saying it to each other anyway. The suddenness and overwhelming power of death defiled renders all explanation useless. Peter ran to the tomb, stooped to look in, saw the linen cloths, and went home, amazed at what had happened. Christ is Risen! Is risen indeed!

Welcome all of you to the one Holy, catholic and Apostolic Church on this glorious Easter morning. Thank you for choosing to celebrate with us the new creation of God's love in the risen Christ! We are here to tell and celebrate and glory in the story of Jesus of Nazareth, as whom God has created the means, the opportunity, and the obligation for humanity to live beyond fear, self-defense and self-interest into the immeasurable joy of confidence, availability and compassion. We will go home from here amazed at what has happened and with a lifetime vocation to use this wonderment for good.

The ancient rituals of this time of year, when nomads celebrated the move to summer pasturage and farmers glorified the new planting season, are older than history. Our Jewish spiritual ancestors saw in Spring a time to celebrate the complete change of life

that came about when they escaped from Egypt at the Passover. No longer in bondage, they became free.

Now as Christians, we continue this tradition with a wholesale overhaul of our own – a spiritual Spring cleaning, when we admit to God, to ourselves and to each other, not only the exact nature of our wrongs, but also the exact nature of God’s righteousness and glory. We accept that goodness, love, and grace are real – not only theoretically possible, but historically accurate. Jesus was indeed born. He indeed lived. He was killed by the people around him for being too theologically provocative and politically subversive. But on this day in history, today of all days, Jesus left his tomb, stunning friend and foe alike, and assumed his permanent life as the inestimable glory we call God. Death no longer has dominion over him, nor over us who seek him out.

Throughout his career as a teacher and preacher, Jesus described the Kingdom of Heaven. His behavior was an ongoing demonstration of the Kingdom of Heaven. His every word was both invitation to and admonition about the Kingdom of Heaven. But today is different. Today, the stone is rolled away, the door is wide open, with no questions asked and no ticket necessary. As Madeline Kahn once memorably urged, “Wilkommen, Bienvenue, Welcome! ...Come on in!”

In another place, the lanes and byways on Easter morning ring out with cries of Hristos Vozkrese! To this

the people joyfully reply: Vo istina Vozkrese! Yes, that's Bulgarian, but when I hear that Christos vozkreze, I can't help but think of the magnificent Frederick Buechner who wrote:

“If the world is sane, then Jesus is mad as a hatter, and the Last Supper was a mad tea party. The world says, ‘Mind your own business,’ and Jesus says, ‘There is no such thing as your own business;’ the world says, ‘Get,’ and Jesus says, ‘Give;’ the world says, ‘Law and order,’ and Jesus says, ‘Love.’ In terms of this world’s sanity, Jesus was crazy as a coot; and anybody who thinks they can follow him without being a little crazy too is laboring less under a cross than under a delusion.”

Christos voz- istina kreze, and so must we be. This is the life to which we are invited. Humility and respect before one another, no matter the circumstances and even when it seems a little crazy. And this Easter morning, the story of Jesus of Nazareth is proof incontrovertible that such a life is, not only possible, not only wondrous, but real.

There are three mysterious things we remember this week: the Eucharist, wherein we take into

ourselves the great and gracious blessing that is Christ. Secondly, is the wondrous fact of concelebration -- we do it together -- we are all celebrants, all priests or there is no communion. And finally, the new commandment: Love one another as I have loved you; to which we are mandated in every sense.

By God we have been given the freedom and to act in love; but also the bounden duty to act in love. If our desire is there, the ability will follow. We can, we must, and if we want to, we will. When we hear this story and are amazed and captivated like Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, we may indeed be called crazy tellers of idle tales, but we tell it out anyway through our lives. We have to go and do likewise, and maybe there will be Peters who go take a look for themselves. The story proves that no matter how painful things get down here in the green Spring valley of the shadow of life and death, the love of Christ enables us to rise to every occasion. Jesus has shown that, with love, the ultimate cruelty of crucifixion will only result in the ultimate healing of resurrection.

This new news is the cause of our celebration today. Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia! However we say it, Christ is Risen. Christos Anesti. or Hristos Vozkrese, it all comes up to Hallelujah!