



CHRIST IS RISEN !

trampling down death  
by death.

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Dear Friends of Mount Saviour,

There is a Byzantine melody we sing at the end of our Vigil-Sunrise Liturgy on Easter Morn which makes our own resurrection almost palpable. The refrain begins, ' Christ is risen...' and has the phrase, ' trampling down death by death...'. At first, this sounds foolish, but like most of the divine foolishness, it is more than we can fathom. Our daily Mass has similar expressions. 'Dying you destroyed our death' and 'We proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes'. What does this last statement mean? Certainly not that we tell everyone Jesus died and keep it up until he returns again. Nor does it mean that we should identify with his executioners, religious or civil, and drag out some sort of guilt trip until the end of days.

The most obvious thing about such phrases is the peculiarly Christian confidence that the death of Jesus the Christ is somehow different. The action of the Liturgy will carry us deeper into the reality, meaning, and re-



sponse to the mystery of Christ's death. But perhaps to focus your attention on the mystery of that death will not be out of place at this season.

The life that Jesus lived on the human level was exactly the same as ours with one exception which was not the presence of divinity but the absence of sin. In the first Passover, the same time and the same event brought death to some and life to others. In this final Passover, at the same time and in the same event Christ received death from the hands of men and life from God. The same sinless life among men resulted in death which before God became eternal life. The event of Christ's death accomplished that Passover through and beyond mortal death to eternal life. By our Baptism, we are united to his death. We become sinless and receive the gift of Christ's eternal life with the Father and Holy Spirit. Our one human life is grafted into the risen life of Jesus without losing its mortal roots. We can draw sustenance from either source, but we cannot do it from both. Our life is now hidden with Christ in God. The death we proclaim is his dying into God, that is to say, into glory. His death eliminates (tramples down) mere mortal death as the only possible death for humankind. Now there is a death into life. And that death can be accomplished during life - we can die daily to our sinful roots or tendencies.

Death-into-life comes about through the sinless quality of our own lives now united to the living Lord. This is precisely the Good News - our present life is more radiant, more glorious, more lightsome than we think or know. It is Christ in us, our hope of glory and we shall be like him when he appears.

In Christ,

*J. Martini*

P.S. The lower Chapel walls are in danger of collapse! Movement occurred due to deep ground freeze. Temporary supports are in place until we can reach the problem areas.







AWAKE, O WINTRY EARTH !

See Father Martin's  
P.S.

At Mount Saviour, as over most of the country, much of the winter news is concerned with the weather. We have not fared badly--the storm windows and insulation installed during the past year or two have kept the heated portions of the buildings warm and cut down significantly the bill for oil. At this time in March the two feet of snow covering the ground and the temperatures from zero to twenty degrees F. would cheerfully be exchanged for something more seasonal, except, perhaps, by those who enjoy new views of the surrounding scenery attained by snowshoes or the cross-country skis very appropriately given us for Christmas this year. One major casualty was the southern part of St. James' barn; it has been disused since the cows moved up the hill in 1959, and the weight of the snow caused the roof to cave in. The loss of these old New York state barns is saddening, but we cannot afford to keep them up for their decorative value alone.

The "great books" seminars led by John Boler and Brother Peter have continued with two discussions of King Lear during January, and two of Plato's Apology of Socrates and Crito in February-March. After Easter two more are planned, on St. Augustine's Confessions.

Brother Paul's four slide lectures on Advent in the Church's liturgy and art were very well received, and he is following them up with three on Lent and another three on Easter. These are presented here for the community, the oblates and other friends in and around Elmira.

During the third week in January we enjoyed a series of conferences on the history of Christian spirituality, given by Sister Jeremy Hall, of St. Benedict's Priory in St. Joseph, Minnesota. This subject is a sort of hobby, as Sister Jeremy is regularly a teacher of theology in the college run by the Benedictine sisters--her published doctoral thesis is mentioned by Father Martin among the recommended books in this Chronicle. Christian spirituality is a continuation of sacred history, there is the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the spiritual men and women in the Church. It was the biographical, historical approach that we took, not the doctrinal, with the seven notes or criteria of change set out by John Henry Newman in his book on the development of doctrine as our guiding principles. Several members of the community also presented conferences during the week, on topics which had been suggested by Sister Jeremy.



The Full Stature of Christ: Sister Jeremy Hall, osb. Those of us for whom The Movement was the Liturgical Movement probably should not review such a book. To begin the task is to find oneself on fire again that under the Headship of Christ all things in our world can be and are being restored! Its basic principles are timeless and unchanging and they are beautifully brought out and organized from the thought and writings of Dom Virgil Michael. It is not a view of the sanctuary but of the Kingdom - on earth as it is in heaven. One should not read it straight through, but ponder the chapters one at a time. It is truly lectio divina and we are eternally grateful to Sr. Jeremy for this labor of love.

Consider the Alternative: Lee M. Silverstein. We came close to starting a small alcohol center at Mount Saviour and the author of this book was the moving force. For a wider audience than the potential or recovering alcoholics, no jargon, no nonsense. Lee really helps to make the plans and take the steps that bring change in any negative life-style.

Br. Luke is continuing to stock more substantial reading. I'd like to recommend Binding the Strong Man - Jesus' victory over Satan. These sermons of Pope St. Leo the Great are arranged for the liturgical seasons: Advent and Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, etc. An other one is Raymond Brown's biblical reflections on Crisis in the Church which treats catechetics, ordination of women, papacy, role of Mary, Jesus, ecumenism. In our Judaeo-Christian tradition, but not catholics, are two outstanding contemporary scholars: Alexander Schmemmann and Abraham Heschel. The former's For the Life of the World is a paperback reissue of Sacraments and Orthodoxy, and the latter's The Sabbath, its meaning for modern man, we have recommended before. Dom Sebastian More's The Crucified Jesus Is No Stranger is also first rate. A slightly bigger-than-tiny paperback, a reprint of Dom David Knowles' The Benedictines remains the best on that topic. Finally our Mount Saviour Cookbook has just about exhausted its first printing. We are proud of its quality and happy with its popularity. If you want to do us and your friends a favor, give it as a gift on any occasion. Twelve year olds and up! Also from Mount Saviour: Fr. Damasus' Pathways in Scripture and Fr. James Kelley's Drink Freely of Love.

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