

SAID ED March 30, 2008

I hope this finds you with Easter joy as the powerful mystery of Christ's resurrection continues to unfold. Didn't our Art and Environment Committee do a spectacular job in creating an atmosphere of Easter joy? The Easter season extends until Pentecost as ponder anew the wonderful mystery of God's love. It is this love which raised Christ from the dead. Because of Baptism we share in his resurrection; opening our hearts to receive God's love.

Hopefully Spring is not far around the corner, I can't tell you how much I am looking forward to it this year. Last year at this time I was in Australia and when we celebrated Easter there, it was the Fall season. It was so hard to think of resurrection and new life as the leaves were falling off the trees, the days got shorter, the nights got longer and the temperatures got cooler. I am so excited about experiencing Spring in the northern hemisphere! Our place on the planet so powerfully reflects the resurrected new life of Christ.

The Easter time is a time to reflect upon our relationship with the risen Christ. Spirit Alive – our diocesan renewal – invites us to deepen our personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We'll be focusing several programs on ways in which you might do this. Ultimately, of course, it depends on each one of our hearts making room for him to be present – that's what we call prayer.

There are many different kinds of prayer. Prayer is basically putting ourselves in the presence of God, listening as Christ speaks to us. Prayer should be more listening than speaking. Note that God gave us two ears and one mouth so that we might listen twice as much as we speak! Paul Ferrini in *Silence of the Heart* says that prayer is the process by which one continually empties out what one thinks one knows and surrenders to the mystery of the moment...Prayer is an opening on our part to receive the gifts of God, an opening to God's unconditional love for each of us, an opening to God's unconditional acceptance of who we really are. When we enter the temple of prayer we are blessed beyond measure. For, in entering, one surrenders. In surrendering, one is washed clean of all judgments that we make about ourselves and others.

What a wonderful description of prayer. I hope that this Easter time will provide many opportunities for you to deepen your personal relationship with Jesus Christ our risen Lord and Savior.

Once again, Happy Easter.

P.S. This week Fr. Bob and I will be attending the annual Bishop's Convocation, which goes from Monday, March 31st to Wednesday, April 2nd. We ask for your prayers and support as we gather with Bishop Clark and all the pastoral leaders of the diocese. This year's Convocation will be in

Auburn, NY. We look forward to spending this time together with one another and our bishop.
