

The Excitement of Feeling at Home *(posted April 1, 2020)*

There have been many times in my 45 years of priesthood that I have had the privilege of witnessing the renewal of vows of those celebrating 25, or 50 years of marriage. I would have the opportunity to ask them what they thought contributed to the longevity of their marriage. Without a “flinch” they would answer, “...we have always felt at home with one another – we have never felt like strangers – but friends to one another.” What a beautiful statement and reflection on life and what it takes to appreciate the long haul. It is the same for a parish community - feeling at home.

I believe it is in discovering our calling in life that we also discover that we are loved and called to love in return. In that discovery we find a new presence - a resurrection presence that makes a home within us. It is a feeling of welcome that we experience that extends from the Easter joy to the realities of each and every person that comes into our life. This Easter morning the word HOME takes

on new meaning for all Christians who have anticipated a new life in faith. For most of this world HOME has become a reality with protecting ourselves against the Coronavirus. Literally living 24-7 with each other has challenged our human emotions and our spiritual life. Life and Resurrection are powerful images for our world these days. More than ever before, perhaps, we find ourselves very fragile and vulnerable. We seek a peaceful place – a safe haven – a place we can spiritually call HOME!

A home is where there is hope. It is a place of trust; a place of growth and transitions. It is here that tears are wiped away and smiles can be worn without fear. By welcoming Him who has sought us we become a new person; an Easter person, for that is what Easter really is - -Becoming - - looking within our hearts and seeing the areas that really need to be reborn and allowing it to happen. It has been a challenging year for many people and we have been shaken in so many ways. Fear is probably the most prominent feeling that we have in our hearts – fear of loneliness – fear of losing our security – fear of losing our jobs and our loved

one's. I always felt that my life depended solely on others. I was wrong! My life depends solely on me and how much I allow others to enter into it. We must discover our worth and we must be at home with it – We must embrace our fears and become comfortable with them – and then allow our faith to embrace us like a parent embraces a child and wipes away the tears and calms the fears. That is what Jesus can do for us – he truly makes us his priority and creates a calmness within us that is like being home. And being home is like having a candle in the window making sure all know that they are welcomed.

Jesus, like a candle, had to spend himself in order to create new life. We must be willing to risk and give of ourselves so the flame can be kept burning bright. We must open our eyes this morning and begin to notice “New Life” around us, in spite of the pain and fears we may have. Just as those who stood at the foot of the Cross; just as those who broke bread at the table with Jesus; and just as those who allowed Jesus to wash their feet, we too must be willing to take the risk and let ourselves go; to

discover a new way of life, a Resurrection way of life, a life not lived alone, or in fear, but for others.

☩ Happy Easter from My Home to Yours! ~ Father
Mike ☩