

# *Easter Vigil*

Although tonight's scripture readings take us through a great deal of human history, we've really advanced only one day. There is just one day between the creation of humankind and the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The first humans were created on the sixth day along with the animals. Then God rested on the seventh day. Why? Was God tired? God's rest is something different than human rest. Human rest refreshes our minds and bodies. God's rest refreshes our souls, our spirits. God invited our first parents into divine rest and they remained there until they ate from the forbidden tree. When they did that, they stepped out of the seventh day of God's rest and stepped into the sixth day of animal brutishness. Along the way of human history there were some who stepped back into the seventh day. There was Abraham who was willing to do whatever God asked, even to the sacrifice of his own son. There was Moses who really didn't want to lead the Israeli but did it because God asked and because of his obedience the people were saved through the waters of the Red Sea. The prophet Isaiah tells us tonight that God will always take us back, at our request. God wishes to feed us with wine and milk, rich foods. God wishes to feed us with His word. God tells his people through the prophet Baruch to stop living in the sixth day and walk in the way of God so as to live in the seventh day. Through Ezekiel God tells the people that he relents and pours clean water over them for their purification, not for the people's sake but for his own sake.

Throughout human history God has desired that humanity live in his rest but we always refused. Finally God did the only thing he could do. He sent his own Son, Jesus Christ who broke through the dense and high barriers humans had erected between the sixth and seventh days. Jesus died, and then rose and broke through the barrier of death, through the seventh day back into the sixth day to make it possible for us, once again, to live in the rest

and peace of the seventh day. It was so dramatic that humanity experienced an earthquake and the lightning of an angelic being. It made such an impact that the woman ran from the tomb, half fearful, half joyful. And on their way to announce the good news, they met Jesus, Himself. Tonight we will be invited to renew our baptismal promises, to express our desire once again to live in the innocence of that first life God came to give us. May our celebration of Easter help us to live, in harmony with God and each other in the seventh day of God's rest.