



A Meditation for Holy Week and the Easter Season

In these days of Holy Week and throughout the Easter season, we have the opportunity not just to remember the events of Jesus' passing from death to life, but to enter those events ourselves, to experience them in our own lives. A great theologian of the ancient church wrote this: "The Father accepts the sacrifice of Christ, not because he demands it, still less because he feels some need of it, but in order to carry forward his own purposes for the world. Humanity had to be brought back to life by the humanity of God. We had to be summoned to life by God's Son." (Gregory of Nazianzus, 4th c.)

The life of the church, the community of those who have been baptized into the death and resurrection of Christ, is nothing less than the extension in time and space of God's humanity. When the apostle Paul writes to one of his churches, "You are the Body of Christ and members of it," he's not kidding. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus *includes* us, it embraces all humanity. The mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection extends to all the deaths and resurrections taking place daily around us. Every injustice, every act of violence, every instance of poverty is a participation in the cross. Every act of justice, kindness and mercy bears the potential for transformed, resurrected life.

The mission of the church is to align itself more and more with God's decision to enter our humanity – with all its pain and possibility – and redeem it. We have the astonishing invitation from God to join in God's project of restoring all creation to right relationship. As Christians we can only do that by realizing our fundamental identification with the dying and rising of the Lord Jesus. As members of his living Body, we are his hands and heart God has given for the needs of a broken and bleeding world. This Holy Week and throughout the Easter season, let us live the words we say. Let us renew our commitment to become who we are. A blessed celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

In Christ,

Handwritten signature of Jeffrey D. Lee.

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