

## Living the Paschal Mystery

Our celebration of the paschal mystery of Jesus' dying and rising in this Easter Season is the very heart of our Christian faith. To what extent is this "Good News" more than a mere intellectual assent for us, more than just another piece of information?

In his encyclical *Spe Salvi*, Pope Benedict XVI challenged us with the question: "Is the Christian faith also for us today a life-changing and life-sustaining hope? Is it 'performative' for us – is it a message which shapes our life in a new way, or is it just 'information' which in the meantime we have set aside and now seems to us to have been superseded by more recent information?"

If the paschal mystery is to be "performative" faith for us, we must live this mystery daily, beginning with small ways. How, for example, do we accept the mystery of Jesus' cross in our daily life? The essence of the cross is found not only in its agonizing pain and cruel injustice. An essential aspect of the mystery of the cross is that it is something Jesus did not choose for himself, did not want for himself, but accepted solely in loving trust that it was somehow his Father's will.

How do we accept the setbacks, the disappointments, the sudden reversals in our fortunes, the illnesses, which we encounter so frequently in life? Are we frustrated and irritated at these uninvited and unwanted intrusions into carefully planned life? Or can we see them as an invitation to patience and the offer of a share in Jesus' cross in our own life?

What of our faith in Jesus' resurrection? If Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead, there are no hopeless situations, though some seemingly hopeless situations will not be resolved in this life. Are we able to live that hope? Are we able to trust that there is absolutely no area of our lives, or the life of the world, that cannot be illumined by the light of Christ's resurrection?

It is in these small, seemingly insignificant, ways that the paschal mystery grows in our life, much as that initial, small, flickering flame of the paschal candle will grow strong and illumines the church throughout this Easter Season. – **Abbot Placid Solari, OSB – Belmont Abbey, Conventual Chaplain ad honorem**