

Father Dave's Weekly Homily

Easter, 2012

-- There's an old story that is told of a sailing ship lost in the South Atlantic Ocean. It drifted for days and the crew was losing hope of ever being rescued.

-- Then another ship came into view. The captain signaled to that ship that they desperately needed fresh water. The other ship signaled back *Lower your buckets where you are*. Thinking his message had been misunderstood, he signaled again. He received the same answer: *Lower your buckets where you are*.

-- After several attempts which resulted in the same answer, he had the crew lower buckets into the water. And, lo and behold, it was fresh water. It turns out the ship had drifted close to Brazil, into a flow of fresh water that extended some miles out from the mouth of the Amazon River.

-- As we come to this celebration of Easter, our lives may seem pretty much the same as they have been the past weeks or months. Friends and loved ones are still losing jobs, getting sick, facing crises or even tragedies. Perhaps some of these have even happened to us.

-- But, like the crew of that boat, we are sitting on the waters of life, often without knowing it. This weekend we rejoice with three members of our community who are being (have been) bathed in the waters of baptism to receive new life in Christ. We also celebrate three others who are being received into full communion in the Catholic Church.

-- They join hundreds in our diocese and thousands throughout the world who receive new life this Easter. But new life is not just for them. In the vigil Mass St. Paul tells us that we have all been baptized into Christ's death so as to be raised to new life.

-- And in Easter Sunday's Mass he tells us that we are raised with Christ in glory. The promise of Easter is there for all of us. It is right under us, so to speak, as that fresh water was right under those thirsty sailors.

-- As part of our Easter celebration each year, we are all invited to renew the promises first made for us at Baptism. They remind us that the lure of evil still exists in the world, that Satan is alive and well.

-- But they also assure us that we have Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who has conquered sin and death for us through his own death and resurrection.

-- And we also have the Holy Spirit, God's presence in the world today, which makes itself known through God's people the Church. Through it we have forgiveness of sins and the promise of resurrection.

-- This is nothing new to us. We have heard it all before. Still, we are reminded each year of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. At this high point of the Church year we once again experience new life.

-- It may not announce itself with bells and whistles. It won't solve all the problems we face or give us instant satisfaction. After all, even the closest followers of Jesus took a while to understand the power of the resurrection.

-- But that power is there, like the air we breathe or the water below us. We have only to reach down and draw from it. The grace of God's new life given through his Church is here for us, not just on this special day but throughout the year.

-- The power of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, gives us strength for the journey of the Christian life.

-- Yes, Christ is risen. God's life is there for us. Let's get our buckets and draw from it, not just today but every day.

-- And may you, your family and loved ones, have a happy and blessed Easter.