

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Mar 30th 2013

I know that, but reminders help. And there are no better reminders than the readings for the Easter Vigil. I had read and thought about the readings before a recent trip to St. Louis where I was lucky enough to tour the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis, a magnificent church covered in mosaics. While craning my neck to view the glass tiles painstakingly and wondrously assembled to portray the Church in the world, the pieces that make up the Easter Vigil came together for me as well. The gleaming church walls illuminate the story of creation, of God's heart-wrenching request of Abraham, of the stories of Moses and Noah.

In the Easter Vigil, the stories and words from the prophets are beautiful and stirring, reminding us that God loves us. Ezekiel tells us that God will "give us a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts." What a blessing to know that my heart, damaged by my sins and my shortcomings, can be made new.

Lent, Holy Week and finally the Easter Vigil help us prepare, to remember that God loves us the way we are, but that he wants us to strive to walk the path of goodness. He lights the way, but we have to make ready. We should be like the stars as Baruch writes: "Before whom the stars at their posts shine and rejoice; when he calls them, they answer, 'Here we are!' shining with joy for their Maker." Here I am, God, shining with joy because God loves us.

And that joy can be never-ending. Isaiah writes, "Though the mountains leave their place and the hills be shaken, my love shall never leave you nor my covenant of peace be shaken, says the Lord, who has mercy on you."

We wait for Easter, these words singing through our veins. We are at the tomb with the women and the apostles, dazed and confused. All of the words from creation to Abraham to Noah to Moses have come true. The love is made real in the crucifixion and the resurrection. The pieces, like the beautiful colored glass tiles of the mosaics, come together to illuminate what we believe and know: God loves us. Let us shine with joy.

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