Easter Vigil 2019

MDP of God

Yesterday, in the reading of the Passion from St John—we heard Jesus say to Pontius Pilate-“For this I was born – for this I came into the world—to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth, hears my voice”

We heard Pilate respond—“What is truth?”

Unfortunately, we live in a world of Pontius Pilates—where many people don’t believe in God given truth- God loves us enough to tell us about Himself- that God loves us enough to explain to us the meaning of our lives—that God loves us enough to tell us good from evil- ///what is right and what is wrong- what He expects and what He forbids

My friends- throughout history- there were some people—other than Jesus- who claimed to be God—*but we don’t know any of their names*—because after death- they were gone

There have been many people who claimed to speak for God or who claimed that they could help us understand the meaning of life—almost none of whom are remembered today

But Jesus is different than every religious founder in the history of the world- he claimed to be God – **and then He proved it**—*He rose from the dead*

Every other religious founder died—**and this is really key-----they stayed dead**

Jesus proved His Divinity by rising from the dead

And so every person on the face of the earth--has to make a decision—is Jesus the all -powerful God- *the Word spoken by the Father who brought all of creation into existence*—**or is He a fraud?**

Does Jesus proclaim the truth that sets us free--- or did He teach pious thoughts that we can choose to accept or reject?

There are many people today who will tell you- “Jesus was a good man and He taught a lot of good things—*but He was just a man”*

As C.S. Lewis and other authors point out—*Jesus doesn’t give us that option*

Good men don’t claim to be God- Good men don’t say, “if you love your mother or father or children more then you love me—you’re not worthy of me”

A liar claiming to be God might say that—but not a god man

A lunatic might say something like that—but not a good man

Jesus leaves us no choice—He’s either a lunatic, or a liar—or He’s Lord--**He’s God in the flesh**

And if He’s God in the flesh – we need to believe everything He taught:

He taught, unless you’re born again of water and the Spirit you have no life in you

He taught unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you cannot inherit eternal life

He taught that He would send His Holy Spirit to guide His Church in all truth so that His faithful people **could know** what He expects and what He forbids- what is good in the sight of God and what is evil—what is right and what is wrong

And of course He taught- *that no sin is greater than His love*—when we repent of our sins and turn to Him -- **He rejoices** *to give us mercy* – **He rejoices** *to forgive our sins*- **He rejoices** *to reconcile us to the Father*

Tonight my friends, we have two young ladies--- who will publicly proclaim – that they believe that Jesus is who He says He is

Who publicly proclaim that they’re relationship with Jesus is what gives meaning to their lives *and they want to grow in their relationship with Him*

In a world filled with Pontius Pilates- in a world where many have rejected the notion of God given truth- *they seek to know the truth* – to live the truth- and to love the truth

Samantha and Alysa have already been born again of water and Spirit— just as with us—on the day of their baptisms *they were elevated to become daughters of God most hig*h—and they became cherished members of God’s family

But tonight—they will be filled with the Holy Spirit in their Confirmation—*the same Spirit that filled the Apostles on Pentecost*—and finally they’ll come for the first time to receive the very body and blood- the soul and Divinity of Jesus in their first Holy Communion

Throughout all of salvation history God was pointing to these saving actions- to these incredible gifts--- through which His saving grace would lift up humanity from this fallen world – and make us ready for the life of heaven by His saving grace

These saving gifts that have the power to transform each of us—*so that we can help transform our fallen world*

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My friends, as they come forward for these incredible gifts—hopefully they will inspire all of us to rejoice *in all that God has done for us*—to rejoice in the gifts that we often take for granted

Pontius Pilate asked- What is truth?--- Tonight our candidates will join with us in proclaiming— Jesus is the truth – Jesus proclaims the truth that sets us free--- that Jesus kept His promise to lead us into all truth.

Amen? Amen

I now Ask Samantha and Alysa—along with their sponsors—to please stand