



## SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



**Abbot Thomas Frerking**  
**Easter Vigil 2010**  
**April 3, 2010**

**Saint Louis Abbey**  
**8:00 p.m. Vigil**

### **Homily**

“Why seek the Living One among the dead? He is not here; he has risen.”

Dear friends, we come now in the celebration of the Triduum to the first great proclamation of the resurrection of the Lord, made by the angels to the women at the tomb.

Our faith in the Lord’s resurrection is founded ultimately on the word of the Lord himself: He manifested to his apostles that he spoke the word of God; he revealed to them that he was both God and man; he revealed to them his resurrection according to his human nature through his prophecies of it, through the empty tomb, through his many appearances to them in the course of forty days, and through the words he spoke to them in explanation of what they were seeing, hearing, touching. The apostles testified to the resurrection of Jesus to the people, and their testimony was confirmed by the many prophecies and miracles which accompanied it. The Church has passed their testimony down the many ages and generations to us, and the testimony of the Church to the resurrection of the Lord is confirmed by the great moral miracles which continuously accompany her testimony, the miracles of her oneness, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity, by the prophecies and physical miracles which have always accompanied her testimony, and by the numerous private signs shown to each human being to whom it is given to recognize that the Church’s testimony is the revelation of God.

The resurrection of the Lord in which we believe is the bodily resurrection of the Lord: it is the rising of his body from death, the reunion of his body with his soul, and the transformation of both his soul and his body into the eternally indefectible state of glory. The body of the risen Lord was the same body he had had in his earthly life, the same body which hung and died upon the Cross; in its risen state it still bore the marks of the wounds suffered on the Cross. But it had been transformed into a spiritual body, still a true body, but now the perfect vehicle of the soul. And the power of Beatific Vision, which the Lord’s soul had always enjoyed, the Lord now released fully into both his soul and his body, glorifying both with a splendor neither imaginable nor conceivable by us in this life.

The resurrection of the Lord, together with his Passion and Death, is his greatest glorification of his Father; it is the greatest vindication of him and his mission; it raises him to the highest heaven where he sits at the right hand of his Father, and from where he pours out the Father’s and his Spirit into all the world. For us, the Lord’s resurrection is the foundation of our faith, the exemplar of what we hope for, the calling forth of that love and joy which his Spirit pours into us and which reach to the Infinite. For the Lord



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gives us the unspeakably great promise that by conforming us through the sacraments he has instituted to his own resurrection he will work in us our own resurrection after the pattern of his resurrection, and that he will begin to do this already in this life. In this life, by Baptism he will effect in us the resurrection of our souls from the state of sin to the state of justification and grace; by Confirmation he will pour into our souls the fullness of his Spirit and make us witnesses to him and to life in his Spirit; by the Eucharist he will give us his very Body and Blood, his Risen Body and the Precious Blood which flows within that Risen Body, he will give us his very Body and Blood as our nourishment in this life, our communion with him. And then, after our death in this world, at the time determined by him, by the final effect of our Baptism he will raise our body, reunite it with our soul, and glorify both forever; by the final effect of our Confirmation he will make us to become pourers forth and breathers forth of the Spirit; by the final effect of the Eucharist he will raise us up on the last day, and, the veils and appearances of the Eucharist disappearing forever, he, seen by us face to face, will give us himself in communion, he in us and we in him, in an unending glory and joy here unknown and unspeakable. So it is that in this Easter Vigil, in which we first hear the proclamation of the Lord's resurrection, we celebrate the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. Through Baptism the Lord will make the elect among us, whom he has chosen, for the first time members of his Body the Church; through Confirmation he will give them the fullness of his Spirit; through the Profession of Faith and Confirmation he will receive those brothers and sisters of ours who are already baptized Christians into the full communion of his Church; in the Eucharist he will bring us all together for the first time in the sacrificial feast of his Body and Blood.

No wonder then, dear friends, that the Easter Vigil is the greatest of the Church's liturgies, no wonder that Easter is her greatest feast, no wonder that Easter introduces her greatest season, the Easter Season of the fifty days of resurrection joy, during which Christians down the ages have greeted one another with the Easter proclamation itself, whose form in Greek and Latin and English it is my joy to remind you of each year:

Christos anesti; alithinos anesti!

Christus surrexit; vere surrexit!

Christ is risen; he is truly risen!