

For people of faith Lent is a time of great anticipation as we await the arrival of Easter. I am sure that the people in the countries where Columban Missionaries live and work are preparing to rejoice in their parishes and communities. Why? Because of the good news of Jesus' Resurrection is not only good news for Jesus. It is especially good news for us too!

Easter reminds us that we too will rise from the dead. In the Resurrection, we also believe that Jesus has not left us behind but is always with us. The question might be: what is Jesus doing when He is with us? Is He just providing us with companionship? Two words remind me that Jesus is more than a companion with us on the road. They are healing and transformation.

Healing

When Jesus rose from the dead He appeared to the disciples and showed them His wounds which were still very visible. But, in His risen body, there was no pain. It is a good image of what the Resurrection of Jesus does for us. We too are healed of our pain through the power of the Resurrection.

Following tragic events around the world, we can see the power of the Resurrection at work in our world. God does not turn away and ignore us during these difficult times. God is "God-with-us." In the risen Jesus, through the power of the Resurrection, through the Holy Spirit, He is at work in the hearts and minds of millions of people to bring healing to individuals and nations.

Transformation

It is common to speak of our growth in life as a journey through a series of transformations. We may sometimes feel that we have reached a physical plateau, but the spirit within us keeps pushing forward. We start to feel things changing within us and then there is a breakthrough. We may even see ourselves and other people differently.

We often read stories where people have had a crisis and with the help of others, they come to a new understanding and a new perspective on life. They have been transformed. This is the power of the Resurrection at work.

Easter is not just a remembrance of something that happened a long time ago and is far from our everyday lives. It is a celebration of what God continues to do in us and in our communities. Despite being crucified, He rose

from the dead because of the love God has for us. That same love continues to heal and transform our whole world. We can bump into the risen Jesus at any time. Sometimes it's dramatic while other times it's more subtle. We might even miss seeing Him.

This Easter, I pray that all of us will meet the risen Lord. It might be at home, at work or even while shopping. If we do, we too will be filled with joy. Then we can be missionaries telling others about what has happened to us. Alleluia! In gratitude for all you do, we remember you and your intentions in our special Easter Masses and prayers.

Columban Fr John Burger is the Regional Director for the USA.

An Easter Prayer

Heavenly Father and God of mercy,
we no longer look for Jesus among the dead,
for he is alive and has become the Lord of life.

From the waters of death,
You raise us with him
and renew Your gift of life within us.

Increase in our minds and hearts
the risen life we share with Christ,
and help us to grow as your people
toward the fullness of eternal life with You.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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