



Paschaltide 2014

Beloved Family,

Christ is risen, risen, risen, risen. He is risen indeed!

I *know* that you know and believe that! And *I* know and believe it. But I don't know that I will ever get over it. How can the finite (and sinful) mind of mere creatures conceive of a **God** who would become *one of us* -- knowing that, in becoming vulnerable to our depravity, we would nail Him to the Cross?

But He rose, He rose, He rose – from the dead to give *us* life. He *knew* the Father would raise Him from the dead – He *came* to die (as we wrote over and over again in our Christmas newsletter). Yet that “plan from all eternity” did not lessen His sacrifice for us, nor the unfathomable truth that “For our sake (God) made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Two lines from the glorious Easter *Exultet* are lodged in my heart:

O truly necessary sin of Adam . . .

(Necessary?? Who could ever understand that?)

And then, and then . . .

Oh happy fault that gave us such a Redeemer!

(And who, this side of Heaven, could understand *that?!)*

Happy fault, and happy we, who are the beneficiaries of such unmerited, undeserved, boundless grace. “O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise!”

We send our greetings to you from France and pray you had a most glorious Easter and are having yet a most wonderful Paschatide as we journey toward our Lord's Ascension. All is going well here in France, in fact life has been so full that we've not been able to get an Easter newsletter to you. But I wanted very much to send the *enclosed* newsletter to you from Silverstream Priory in Ireland! It is only the second newsletter Father Mark Daniel Kirby has been able to send in the two years since moving from Tulsa to found a new monastery in County Meath, Ireland.

Among numerous wonderful reports, you will read what, to me, is its highlight: Father Kirby's own

Exultet which I find extraordinarily beautiful and more wonderful than anything I could have written to you in an Easter newsletter. I pray you will be able to take the time to read it through. I am so very grateful that, in this day of so many ills in the world, including those attacking the Church from within and without, there is a new breath of fresh air – fresh Catholic air – utterly faithful to the Magisterium with a heart for the world our Lord came to save, and, more, for the *Lord* of the world, the Lord of history who will not allow the gates of hell to prevail against His Church.

Some years ago, just prior to the start of the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Israel's Hope, I read a book which traced the history of religious orders that journeyed from Ireland to America, at great cost, in the late 1800's, bringing with them the faith that led many thousands to Christ and His Church. What we owe those courageous and unimaginably sacrificial religious is beyond measure. Although a few generations have since passed and much of their work is unknown today, I have longed for a way to thank them.

Dom Mark Daniel Kirby has found a way. It is *one* way, and it, like every great work throughout history, has begun as a seed, an acorn, a sign of promise that, God willing, will grow into a work of great glory for our King. Father Kirby has described the work in his newsletter together with their present needs. I have personally visited Silverstream Priory and can assure you that their needs are even greater than what Father Kirby has described. They have had some very generous benefactors who have assisted in major ways, especially in making it possible for Father and the brothers to continue to cover rent, food and basic needs until such time as they can purchase the building and land.

Yet they do not cease to pray, to trust that He who called them is faithful, and to live Benedictine hospitality to the full in receiving many guests who come to them seeking God in a peaceful, safe and faithful haven in the midst of the painful confusion and dissent of our day.

I, for one, would cross the ocean to come under the teaching and example of such priests and monks. Apparently so would others. Father is receiving young men who desire to live out their calling to Benedictine life in true poverty and in trust, without counting the cost – just as our Lord would have it.

I ask you to join me in praying for the monks of Silverstream Priory and for this new seed that has indeed begun to flower in the harvest of God's vineyard and plan for His Church. If you are able to contribute financially, you can do so knowing that your gifts will be spent completely for our Lord's Kingdom, for souls, and, above all, for priests – without whom there can be no Church.

Perhaps you know of others who would wish to be counted among the pioneers of this new shoot from the tree of St. Benedict that promises to bring so much light to Ireland and perhaps, if history repeats itself, back to America. I came across the following excerpt from a book titled, "The End of Irish Catholicism?" by Father D. Vincent Twomey, SVD, published by Veritas Publications: I have not yet read the book and so cannot recommend it to you; but I certainly can recommend the excerpt:

The Church on earth is by its very nature a Church lurching from one crisis to another: it is after all, in more traditional parlance, the 'Church militant', the mystical Body at war with the evil within and without the Christian community. Christians are always a threatened species, and the Church is in every era confronted by what seem to be insurmountable difficulties. But it has always emerged renewed by the struggle. Today's crisis, I am convinced, will in time yield a new flowering of Church life in a new environment, that of modern Ireland, though not without considerable effort and, even more, help from above. That help is assured. Less assured is our indispensable contribution. The limited task of the second part of the book is to explore what human initiatives might be undertaken to enable the Church to respond appropriately to the modern world by – among other things – tapping into the more ancient traditions of the Catholic Church, both local and universal . . . I shall argue that this potential, in the past as at present, has largely lain dormant and is still untapped.

May Silverstream Priory be “tapped” indeed for all its potential in spreading and restoring the faith, through our prayers and “indispensable contributions.”

Our love, ceaseless prayers and gratitude for and to you all. The postulants and I wish you and your families a most blessed Paschaltide and a glorious Feast of the Ascension, in the One who came that we might have Life,

Mother Miriam of the Lamb of God, O.S.B.