

Easter Sunday  
Cathedral of Saint Paul  
April 4, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.

by The Most Reverend John C. Nienstedt

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A remarkable event took place last evening in this Cathedral and in numerous Churches across this great nation. Men and women, old and young, came forward to make a profession of faith, some to be baptized into God's new life, most to be confirmed in the Holy Spirit and all to be admitted for the first time to Christ's banquet of the Holy Eucharist. I myself baptized nine in this Cathedral and confirmed 16.

Throughout this Archdiocese, 182 catechumens were baptized and 515 were confirmed. In the Los Angeles Archdiocese, 1,408 were baptized and 980 confirmed. All told, 25,231 persons were added to the Catholic Church last night here in this country alone. These new members of our Church left their past behind and took a courageous step forward on the journey of faith! Those that are here today – welcome home!

What this tells me is that the search for the Risen Jesus, so clearly dramatized in this morning's Gospel by Mary Magdalene, as well as by Peter and John, is not over. What this tells me is that the preaching of conversion by St. Peter in our first reading is not dead. What this tells me is that the advice of St. Paul to the Colossians to be intent on "the things above" is still reliable. For Jesus Christ is truly Risen and he lives for us today, right here and now.

But what does this message mean for you and me on this April day in 2010? When the glow of our Easter celebration is over, what difference will it have made? How will we maintain the personal conversion we experienced from our Lenten observances? In what way will we incorporate this renewed faith into our everyday lives?

These are important questions that go to the heart of the Profession of Faith we make together this morning.

We will say we believe in God—well, how do we live that?

We will say we believe in Jesus Christ—to what extent do we follow his teachings?

We will say we believe in the Holy Spirit—but how are we trying to listen to him speak?

We will say we believe in the Church as the means of experiencing the forgiveness of sins—how well have we responded to that call?

You see—today is all about new life, about transformation, and about second chances. That Jesus, who was dead, now lives means that this same process of rebirth is possible for you and me.

For He lives to rid us of our sin.

He lives to call us to holiness.

He lives to form us into his Body, the Church.

He lives to motivate our service to the poor, the sick and the stranger.  
He lives so that we may live.

The fact that Jesus lives should give us great hope. Jesus' transforming love – formed in the crucible of his Passion, Death and Resurrection – is able to engage and wrestle with the reality of evil in us, in our world and in our Church, overcoming such evil by molding us into instruments of virtue, good works and a witness to holiness.

As we renew the promises of our Baptism this morning, let us be reminded of our great call to build the Kingdom of God through our attitudes and actions. And let us be reborn again with passion and dedication to live that great call.

My dear friends,

Jesus lives.  
He lives in you.  
He lives in me.  
He lives in us, his Church.  
Amen. Alleluia!