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Retreat Ministry • Parish Missions

"Come away by yourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile!..." Mark 6:31
Are you ready to accept the invitation?

5 April 2015 - The Feast of Easter

If you strive to be faithful to Jesus, this is where it leads you: to an empty tomb.

Jesus was faithful, even when God and God's way became totally mysterious – as we too must be faithful. The heart of the Incarnation, of God-becoming-flesh, is found in Jesus' radical acceptance of what we so frequently forget: that every person is born incomplete, unfinished, not yet at home. The whole human experience is one of becoming, of ongoing formation, ongoing conversion. We will only know fully what it is to be human, and our formation will only be complete, when the journey of life is over – and only then if the journey has been made well. This was true even with Jesus: the Incarnation was completed only with the resurrection.

And that, not the empty cross, but the empty tomb, is the end of the story. Everything was torn away from Jesus, so that he was only for God – but then everything, and more, was later restored. The best possible thing happened: the Father welcomed the Son home. And now we finally know the answer to the question, what does it mean to be the Son of God? The answer is in the symbol of the empty tomb: To be a son or daughter of God, which each of us was declared to be at our baptism, means not that we will escape dying, but that we will escape death. Each of us will experience dying in many ways: the dying of youth as we grow in age; the dying of good health in times of sickness; the dying of unfulfilled dreams, hopes, perhaps relationships – and is not every act of love, of unselfish giving, a small act of dying? And then, of course, will come our physical dying. But none of them is the end of the story. We will, like Jesus, escape death – it does not have the last word. Don't you see? The tomb is empty! The Father is waiting to welcome us home.

Give thanks for your life: It will change, but never end.

Patrick Foley