**17 April 2022 – Easter Sunday**

* GOOD MORNING TO YOU ON THIS BLESSED MORNING!
  + DO YOU FEEL BRAND NEW!
* WHAT IS EASTER TO YOU?
  + DO YOU COME HERE BECAUSE YOU HAVE ALWAYS COME TO CHURCH ON EASTER, BECAUSE IT’S SOMETHING YOU’VE DONE ALL YOUR LIFE?
  + DO YOU COME SIMPLY TO WELCOME SPRING?
  + OR HAVE YOU COME TO CELEBRATE EASTER IN A SAFE PLACE, A PLACE THAT IS YOUR SPIRITUAL HOME?
    - WHAT IS EASTER THROUGH YOUR EYES?
* **WHATEVER EASTER HAS BEEN TO YOU…**
  + I INVITE YOU TO OPEN YOUR MIND AND HEART TO THE MIRACLE OF THIS DAY.
    - WE ARE HERE TODAY BECAUSE OF A MIRACLE, A MIRACLE OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION.
      * A MIRACLE THAT IS A METAPHOR FOR ALL OF OUR LIVES.
  + DEATH AND REBIRTH IS A SPIRITUAL PROCESS THAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME.
    - EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US KNOWS THAT IF WE’RE GOING TO LIVE,
      * ESPECIALLY IF WE’RE GOING TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY THAT THERE IS A CONSTANT PROCESS OF DEATH AND REBIRTH.
        + WE DIE TO THE OLD WAY AND WE’RE BORN AGAIN ANEW.
        + WE DIE TO THE OLD THOUGHTS, WE DIE TO THE OLD ATTITUDE, WE DIE TO THE OLD SELF.

AND EVERY TIME WE GROW AND CHANGE, AN ASPECT OF US DIES AND WE’RE BORN AGAIN.

IT’S A CONSTANT PROCESS OF DYING TO THE OLD WAY AND BEING REBORN AGAIN INTO THE GREATER WAY.

* TODAY WE CELEBRATE THE ONE WHO COMPLETED THIS EARTHLY CURRICULUM.
  + HE WENT ALL THE WAY,
    - TRANSFORMED HIS LIFE,
    - RAISED HIS BODY UP,
      * NOT ONLY RESURRECTED THE BODY BUT THEN ASCENDED,
    - BECAME FULLY ILLUMINED AND REMAINS WITH US AS
      * TEACHER,
      * GUIDE,
      * FRIEND,
      * SAVIOR,
        + SAVING US FROM OUR OWN ERROR THINKING,
        + OUR OWN THOUGHTS OF LACK AND LIMITATION

AND CALLING US TO REMEMBER THAT THE SAME SPIRIT THAT RAISED HIM UP

IS THE SPIRIT THAT’S IN YOU

AND THE SPIRIT THAT’S IN ME.

* + CHARLES FILLMORE REMINDS US THAT EASTER IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE RISING UP OF THE TRIUMPHANT CHRIST SPIRIT IN YOU AND IN ME.
* DO YOU EVER HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR CHALLENGES IN YOUR LIFE?
  + IS THERE EVER ANY TIME WHEN THERE’S ANY OBSTACLE THAT IT LOOKS LIKE THERE’S NO WAY YOU CAN OVERCOME IT?
  + DOES ANYBODY HERE EVER GET OVERWHELMED BY THE THINGS THAT ARE BEFORE THEM?
    - LOOK AROUND AT YOUR NEIGHBORS.
      * YOU’RE NOT ALONE.
  + RESURRECTION IS ABOUT RISING UP FROM DESPAIR.
    - AND SITTING NOT TOO FAR FROM YOU THIS MORNING IS SOMEONE WHOSE LIFE IS A RESURRECTION STORY,
      * SOMEONE WHO HAS RISEN UP AFTER THE DEADNESS OF ABUSE OR ADDICTION,
      * SOMEONE WHO HAS RISEN UP OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF GRIEF,
      * SOMEONE WHO HAS RISEN UP FROM DEPRESSION AND DESPAIR.
* I RECENTLY HEARD A STORY THAT SEEMS TO ME VERY MUCH A STORY OF RESURRECTION
  + DID NOT KNOW WHERE HE WAS BORN
  + DID NOT KNOW WHO HIS FATHER WAS UNTIL HE WAS 29
  + EVEN HIS OWN MOTHER DID NOT KNOW WHO HIS FATHER WAS
  + MOTHER DRUG ADDICT
  + LIVED IN A TRAVEL TRIALER BEHIND A GAS STATION IN T OR C
  + ABUSED
  + NEGLECTED
    - HAD EVERY REASON TO NOT THRIVE IN LIFE
      * I DO NOT KNOW WHAT HIS FINAL EXPERIENCE WAS THAT CAUSED HIMN TO DIE TO HIS OLD SELF
  + HE WAS SMART
    - AND ROSE THROUGH THE RANKS OF AN ENGINEERING CAREER TO ONE DAY BE ASKED TO BECOME THE CEO OF A COMPANY
      * YET HE FELT LIKE AN IMPOSTER
        + HE WAS TOLD

YOU’RE A NOBODY

YOU’LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING

YET HERE HE WAS BEING ASKED TO BE THE CEO OF AN ENGINEERING FIRM

* + - * + HE SHARED THAT CHILDHOOD TRUAMA RUNS DEEP
        + IT WAS ALL BUT IMPOSSIBLE TO OVERCOME

BUT THERE WAS SOMEONE

A FRIEND WHO TOLD HIM THE TRUTH ABOUT HIMSELF

PUSHED HIM TO GROW

“GROW UP”

* + - SO HE BECAME THE CEO
      * AND GREW THE COMPANY CHAVEZ-GRIEVES TO ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ENGINEERING FIRMS IN THE SW
    - AND NOW
      * CEO CHRIS YOUNGBLOOD
        + CREATOR OF A VERY SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM FOR AT RISK YOUTHS

LIFEQUEST USA

* + - * + Founder of project athena

For female CANCER SURVIVORS

* + - * + BOARD OF AMBASSADORS

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF NM

* + - * CROSSED OUT THE PAST
      * RISE TO SOMEONE NEW.
* I DON’T KNOW WHAT THEIR SPIRITUAL TRADITION WAS,
  + BUT I DO KNOW THAT HE HAD SUFFERED GREATLY AND THAT HE DECIDED, ALTHOUGH HE WAS OSTRACIZED, TO BREAK THE BONDS OF SILENCE AND POINT THE WAY TO HOPE, FOR HIMSELF AND OTHERS.
    - FOR ME, THAT’S RESURRECTION.
* WHAT I’D LIKE YOU TO GET TODAY, TO REALLY HEAR TODAY IS THAT’S THE VERY REASON WE HAVE EASTER.
  + IN THE MIDST OF OUR TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS WE HAVE THIS GLORIOUS HOLIDAY THAT IS THE CELEBRATION OF OVERCOMING.
  + JESUS, ON EASTER MORNING, SO CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THAT EVERYTHING IN LIFE CAN BE OVERCOME.
    - THROUGH ALL OF JESUS’ TRIALS, HE WAS SURE OF THE FATHER’S LOVE.
      * AND JESUS WANTED US TO ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT THE SAME FATHER WHO LOVED HIM, LOVES US.
      * GOD LOVES US.
        + EVERY CHALLENGE,
        + EVERY OBSTACLE,
        + EVERY PROBLEM,
        + EVERY HURDLE,
        + EVERYTHING THAT WE DEAL WITH ON A DAY TO DAY BASIS,

ON EASTER MORNING,

WE REALIZE IT CAN BE OVERCOME BECAUSE GOD IS HERE LOVING US IN THE MIDST OF IT ALL.

* BUT SOMETIMES, IN THE BUSYNESS OF LIVING, IN THE ACTIVITY OF LIFE, MAYBE EVENING BY TOMORROW MORNING, WE FORGET WE CAN OVERCOME IT.
  + WE FORGET THERE’S A POWER GREATER THAN US THAT IS ALWAYS AT WORK,
    - LEADING US THROUGH EVERY SITUATION.
  + JESUS IS HERE, SAYING LOOK, THIS TOO CAN BE OVERCOME.
    - EVEN DEATH ITSELF CAN BE OVERCOME.
* JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SHOW US OVER AND OVER AGAIN ALL THE LIMITATIONS THAT WE THINK ARE SO OVERWHELMING, HE SAID WE CAN OVERCOME.
  + HE WALKED ON WATER,
  + HE HEALED THE SICK,
  + HE FED THE MULTITUDE,
  + HE RAISED LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD.
  + HE WAS CONTINUALLY SAYING CHECK THIS OUT!
    - I CAN’T FIND THAT ANYWHERE IN SCRIPTURE. IT’S A PARAPHRASE; I KNOW IT’S A PARAPHRASE.
  + BUT THE REALITY IS THAT’S WHAT HE WAS SAYING.
    - CHECK THIS OUT!
    - LOOK WHAT I CAN DO WHEN I AM PERFECTLY ALIGNED WITH THE FATHER.
      * AND REMEMBER HE SAID EVEN GREATER THINGS CAN WE DO.
* THE TRUTH IS **WE ARE HERE TO EXPRESS GOD.**
  + EACH ONE OF US IS A LIVING EXPRESSION OF GOD.
  + AND EASTER GIVES US THE OPPORTUNITY TO REMEMBER THAT ON THIS DAY, ESPECIALLY THIS DAY;
    - WE CAN BEGIN A NEW LIFE.
* **JOSEPH CAMPBELL THE GREAT MYTHOLOGIST SAID…**
  + “EASTER AND PASSOVER OFFER THE PERFECT SYMBOLS, FOR THEY MEAN THAT WE ARE CALLED TO NEW LIFE. THIS NEW LIFE IS NOT VERY WELL DEFINED, WHICH IS WHY WE WANT TO HOLD ONTO THE PAST. THE JOURNEY TO THIS NEW LIFE, A JOURNEY WE ALL MUST MAKE, CANNOT BE MADE UNLESS WE LET GO OF THE PAST.”
* EASTER IS AN INVITATION TO EACH OF US TO ASK OURSELVES THE QUESTION,
  + WHAT AREA OF MY LIFE NEEDS TO BE RESURRECTED?
  + EASTER, FOR ME, IS ABOUT THE MIRACLE OF NEW LIFE WHICH CAN HAPPEN TO ANY OF US,
    - IF WE HAVE THE FAITH TO BELIEVE THAT IT’S POSSIBLE—
    - AND THE COURAGE TO LET GO OF THE THINGS THAT KEEP US IN A PAINFUL PRESENT, OR KEEP THE PRESENT PAINFUL.
      * IT’S ABOUT FAITH,
        + FAITH THAT WE SOMEHOW FIND OUR WAY TO A NEW LIFE THAT WE CANNOT SEE OR EVEN PERHAPS IMAGINE.
* SO AS WE GATHER HERE ON EASTER MORNING,
  + WE ARE HERE TO REMEMBER,
  + WE ARE HERE TO CELEBRATE AND
  + WE ARE HERE TO GIVE THANKS FOR THE GIFT OF THE RESURRECTION.
    - AND AS GOOD AS IT IS TO REMEMBER, CELEBRATE AND GIVE THANKS;
      * WE MUST DO MORE THAN JUST REMEMBER, CELEBRATE AND GIVE THANKS.
  + IF WE ARE GOING TO TRULY REALIZE THE GREAT GIFT OF THE RESURRECTION FOR US AND HUMANKIND,
    - WE MUST BRING THE RESURRECTION TO LIFE, TODAY.
      * JESUS DIDN’T WANT US TO JUST CELEBRATE THE GREAT MIRACLE OF HIS RESURRECTION,
        + HE WANTED US TO LEARN FROM IT,

SO WE CAN EXPERIENCE THE GREAT MIRACLE OF OUR OWN RESURRECTION.

* + WE CAN ALL LIVE LIFE MORE FREELY AND JOYOUSLY.
    - WE CAN UPLIFT OURSELVES FROM ANY SITUATION,
      * BUT IT REQUIRES US TO MAKE A CHOICE.
      * WE NEED TO ASK OURSELVES,
        + AM I A CRUCIFIXION PERSON OR A RESURRECTION PERSON.
* **FROM AN ARTICLE BY KAYLIN WILLIAMS.**
  + ARE YOU A CRUCIFIXION PERSON OR A RESURRECTION PERSON? DO YOU BELIEVE WE ARE BORN TO SUFFER AND DIE WITH OUR ULTIMATE REWARD COMING AT SOME OTHER PLACE AT SOME OTHER TIME? OR ARE YOU A RESURRECTION PERSON, IMMERSED IN LEAVING BEHIND SUFFERING AND BUILDING A NEW LIFE, IMMERSED IN BEING BORN AND ENJOYING LIFE HERE AND NOW. TO BE A RESURRECTION PERSON IS TO EMBRACE THE IDEA THAT GOD IS ALIVE AND LIVING IN EVERYONE. REBORN IN EVERY MOMENT, WE AFFIRM OUR CONNECTION WITH GOD. IT IS TO FACE GOD EVERY DAY, A GOD WHO WORKS THROUGH US, WITH OUR DIVINE CALLINGS IN OUR HEARTS, TEACHING US WHAT WE NEED TO BE NEW. TO BE A RESURRECTION PERSON WE MUST CELEBRATE THE UNIQUE BEAUTY IN EVERY PERSON FOR IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO EMBRACE OUR OWN RESURRECTION UNLESS WE EMBRACE THE RESURRECTION OF OTHERS.
* RESURRECTION REQUIRES A COMMITMENT FOR US TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE,
  + MORE HEAVEN LIKE
    - RATHER THAN BELIEVING THAT THIS PLACE IS TO BE THE SPOT WHERE PEOPLE SUFFER AND DIE FOR THE GLORY OF A DISTANT GOD.
* RESURRECTION REQUIRES AN ACTIVE ROMANCE WITH POSSIBILITY.
  + THE ONLY WAY TO BE A RESURRECTION PERSON IS TO BE WILLING TO LET GO OF PARTS OF US AND ALLOW THEM TO DIE SO THAT WE MAY BE REBORN.
    - ARE YOU A CRUCIFIXION PERSON OR A RESURRECTION PERSON?
      * WHICH WOULD YOU LIKE?
      * TO BE BORN ANEW IN EVERY MOMENT OR PINNED TO A CROSS FOR THE REST OF YOUR MORTAL LIFE.
        + AND ARE YOU WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE FOR WHICHEVER CHOICE YOU MAKE?
* THE QUESTION IS HOW DO WE BECOME A RESURRECTION PERSON?
  + HOW DO WE EXPERIENCE THE GREAT MIRACLE OF RESURRECTION IN OUR LIVES?
    - HERE’S ONE KEY.
      * WE NEED TO REMEMBER TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR LIVES.
        + NO ONE CAN LIVE LIFE FOR US.
        + NO ONE CAN LAUGH FOR US,
        + NO ONE CAN LOVE FOR US,
        + NO ONE CAN FORGIVE FOR US,
        + NO ONE CAN LIVE OUR LIFE EXCEPT US.
        + AND NO ONE CAN TAKE AWAY OUR JOY OR GIVE US JOY EXCEPT US.
      * GOD DOES NOT WITHHOLD ANY GOOD THING FROM ANYONE BUT WILL GIVE ACCORDING TO OUR ABILITY TO RECEIVE.
    - THE TRUTH IS WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FULFILLING GOD’S WORK.
  + WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING OUR LIVES AND OUR RELATIONSHIPS.
    - IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHOOSE TO RISE UP FROM ANY PAIN OR STRUGGLE IN OUR LIVES.
    - IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE GREATER POSSIBILITIES, TO BE OPEN TO GREATER THINGS, TO UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITIES.
    - IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FOLLOW OUR HEART, TO FOLLOW OUR DIVINE CALLING.
  + IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING AS BIG AS A NEW CAREER, OR GOING BACK TO SCHOOL.
  + IT MIGHT BE CONTINUING IN OUR PRESENT WORK AND LIFE—
    - BUT APPROACHING IT WITH FRESH EYES,
      * AS A MINISTRY RATHER THAN JUST A JOB.
  + OR IT MIGHT BE A CHANGE IN WHAT WE DO WITH OUR LIVES OUTSIDE OF WORK,
    - GIVING A GIFT OF OURSELVES TO THOSE AROUND US.
  + OR IT MIGHT BE SIMPLY THE STRUGGLE TO FREE OURSELVES FROM THE BONDS OF DEPRESSION.
  + WHO KNOWS WHAT IT MIGHT BE?
    - I WANT TO THINK OF IT, AT THE VERY LEAST,
      * AS A NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE,
      * A NEW WAY OF EXPERIENCING THE WORLD.
      * A NEW TRUST THAT THE SUN WILL RISE AGAIN,
        + AS WE LEARN TO TRUST THAT THERE IS WITHIN US,
        + AND WITHIN EVERYONE WE MEET,

THE SPARK AND THEREFORE THE POTENTIAL OF THE DIVINE.

* AND WHEN WE BEGIN REALLY LIVING WITHIN THE EASTER EXPERIENCE,
  + WE HAVE THE ABILITY,
    - IN SPITE OF THE HATRED IN THE WORLD,
      * TO RISE TO LOVE.
  + WE HAVE THE ABILITY,
    - IN SPITE OF THE VIOLENCE AROUND THE GLOBE,
      * TO RISE TO PEACE.
  + WE HAVE THE ABILITY,
    - IN SPITE OF THE INTOLERANCE BY SO MANY,
      * TO RISE TO EMBRACE DIVERSITY.
  + AND WE HAVE THE ABILITY,
    - IN SPITE OF THE WARFARE AND DEVASTATION,
      * TO RISE TO HOPE.
* MY PRAYER FOR YOU TODAY IS THAT YOU BEGIN TO LIVE THE EASTER EXPERIENCE.
  + THAT YOU FIND PERSONAL INSPIRATION IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE CHRIST,
  + THAT YOU REMEMBER THAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS POWERFUL, PERFECT AND EVER PRESENT,
    - AND GREATER THAN WHATEVER HAPPENS TO YOU IN YOUR LIFE.
      * FOR WE ARE
        + PEOPLE OF THE RESURRECTION
* EASTER BLESSINGS TO YOU AND YOURS. AMEN AND AMEN.