

He is not here; for He has been raised, as He said. Mt 28:6

In the Resurrection we are assured that there are no doors that are eternally closed. Every time we close a door, or one is closed on us, God opens another for us. The Resurrection assures us that God never gives up on us, even if we give up on ourselves, that we can be forgiven when we repent and return to his love. God's love is mighty than all our sins combined. The passion of Jesus is a reminder that even when people acted on him; misjudged, betrayed, beaten, humiliated, taunted, stripped naked, nailed to the cross to die, he continued to show his love and forgiveness to them. He continued to breathe the life of God in them. The stone has been rolled back and the tomb is empty; resurrected life cannot be contained. Like the first believers, we so often must continue to live even with our dashed hopes and our misunderstanding of God's mysterious power. Like the first believers, we come to the tomb and expect to find death, but instead we find signs of a new life we cannot even begin to comprehend. The tomb can be seen as a chamber built of stones; stones like self-interest, resistance to change, a hardened heart, an unrepentant spirit, self-righteousness, misunderstanding, violence and materialistic view of life. These are the mini tombs that we bury ourselves and these are what bury God within us. We are human and we cannot at times avoid falling into sin and evil. God becomes hidden beneath the weight of our evils. Like Jesus, we too will have our crucifixions. More than one tomb awaits us. Yet, God raises to life those who hear his voice, just as he did with Jesus. Easter, the feast of the Resurrection, gives us the joyful message that we are a "Resurrection people." This means that we are not supposed to lie buried in the tomb of our sins and evil habits. While the Easter mystery does not deny the reality of suffering, pain and sorrows, it does proclaim reason for hope in the human condition. It enables us, even in the most difficult and desperate of times, to live our lives in hopeful certainty of the fulfillment of the resurrection at the end of our life. Hence, Resurrection is not just a question of one day, after death, rising from the dead, but it is also about daily rising from the many mini tombs within which we so often find ourselves. Once risen, we live for God's interests, values, beliefs, goals and attitudes. This leads to a new life founded on love and mercy, a life filled with lasting peace and happiness. Easter reminds us that life is worth living. It gives us the Good News that no tombs can hold us down any longer; not the tombs of despair, discouragement, doubt, or death itself. We are called to rise with the Risen Lord and experience his real presence in all the events of our lives. Jesus is Risen... wish you a Blessed Easter! Br Manoj Xalxo, OFM