

Hope for Life

For with thee is the fountain of life: In thy light shall we see light. (Psalm 36:9 KJV)

I have spent a lot of time reflecting on suffering and death lately. As some of you know, my daughter suffers from a chronic, potentially fatal condition, and the year 2020 started for me with the death of my mother in January, followed by a February struggling to help my family come to grips with the suicide of my young nephew.

Then COVID-19 began for all of us in the midst of Lent, and the whole world retreated soberly within itself. A normally joyous Easter and the subsequent spring season of new life had to be recognized by lonesome celebrations of online services and outdoor walks which followed the prescribed restrictions.

It has been life affirming to me to have this favorite verse of mine playing over and again in my head. For those of us who celebrate the liturgical calendar, the Easter season is just now coming to a close. During this season, both online and off, I have sung out the ancient hymn of the church hundreds of times: "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life." This proclamation of Easter has been sung in churches countless times by millions of voices over the centuries. The message is ever the same, and never loses its power to bring hope and joy to Christian believers.

Many of us have reason to feel stressed, fearful, and sorrowful in our isolation. We have read of thousands suffering from

COVID-19, and more suffering from the social and economic breakdowns within our society. Some of us have been ill or have lost friends or family members to this disease. This unique time is not so unique in its suffering, for everywhere and at all times there have been death and suffering. How blessed we are to know that Christ has overcome death by His death.

Yet, sheltering away from friends and family, struggling to work and to experience church can sometimes feel like we are confined in a tomb. Some days, we feel lonely, and wonder despairingly if an end is in sight.

But rejoice! Christ IS risen from the dead and He has victoriously trampled death by His death. To us, in our tombs today, He bestows life because He is the unending fountain of life.

I offer a 2000-year-old reminder to you, that in our dark moments Christ brings light. When we thirst for understanding, He offers us a fountain of life. He is not just a faraway Presence in the Heavens, though He is there. He actually came to us, bringing His light and life to us, and triumphantly tramples death by death. This is how our God works. It is good to remind ourselves.



—Donna Greenhut

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