

**Father Brad Neely**

**Easter Vigil: Sts Peter & Paul: April 03, 2010**

**Reading II: Gn 22: 1-18**

**Reading IV IS 54: 5-14**

In the universal Church---  
all over the world on this evening---  
people are gathering in the midst  
of their local communities---  
and entering into new lives as Catholic Christians.  
This once-yearly rite echoes the tradition  
of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century Church.  
**In** the early Church,  
on the eve of Easter morning,  
those who have been *prepared*,  
step forward to profess their faith **in**,  
and / or receive the Sacraments of Initiation **into**  
the Church that Jesus started---  
the Church now in its 21<sup>st</sup> century.

21 centuries ago, Christ brought to fulfillment  
what had been God's steady progression  
of revelation to humanity---  
revealing "I am your God, and your God alone."  
It is the history of being **saved for** eternal divine life.  
This salvation history is the story of *Emmanuel*---  
meaning "God with us."  
Human life is new again with Christ.

So, what is the new life  
we may now enter into --through Jesus?  
We started this evening  
with the "*Service of Light*."  
Jesus **IS** light itself.  
God was enfleshed into a world darkened by sin.  
The Son of the heavenly Father  
brought to this world-- light.  
**In this new life, we are to live in this light.**  
\*In the midst of the Service of Light,  
we heard the Exultet---*triumphant rejoicing*  
as a result of what God has done for us---  
how God is with us in a new way with Jesus.  
**In this new life, we are to live in this joy.**  
\*This evening we hear excerpts from Scripture---  
news of our salvation history.  
Through Scripture, God talks to humanity in every age.  
**In this new life, we live in God's word.**  
\*Todd and Dion will soon be baptized---  
formally immersed in the life of Christ---  
their souls purified,  
and they becoming---  
like we who are already baptized,  
members of Christ body.  
**In this new life, we live immersed--baptized  
within the beauty and strength of Christ.**

**Reading III: Ex 14: 15f**

**Reading VII Ez 36: 16f**

\*During the rite of baptism,  
we will hear the Litany of Saints.  
**In this new life, we live in the company  
and intercession of those  
who have gone before us  
leading extra-ordinary lives of faith.**  
\*What follows the Litany  
is a Renunciation of Sin and a Profession of Faith.  
**In this new life, we take a stand,  
and proclaim our beliefs.**  
\*Todd and Dion, after immersion  
in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
will don a white garment---  
a symbol of being clothed with Jesus.  
**In this new life, we "wear" Christ in the world.**  
\*In the sacrament of Confirmation this evening,  
Dion and Todd receive a particular outpouring  
of God's Holy Spirit,  
strengthening them to live out  
their immersion in Christ.  
**In this new life, we are aided by God's Spirit  
as we travel the pathway to eternal divine life.**  
\*The center of every liturgy is Christ,  
because He is the center of all faith and history.  
We call upon the Holy Spirit  
to make Christ himself present to us in the Eucharist.  
**In this new life, we are nourished on our journey  
by none other than the One who saves us.**  
\*After communion, we pray,  
and take our leave from this consecrated space.  
**In this new life, we take Christ with us  
as we go out into the world.**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century  
since the incarnation of God in the world,  
we take our watch,  
and join Christ's Church  
in living out, and safeguarding,  
what has been divinely reveals to humanity.  
This necessarily requires us  
to live a life apart from the maddening crowd---  
even though all are called by God  
to be members of His body of believers.  
**In this new life,  
we are Christ's eyes, ears, lips, hands, and feet.  
We give voice and action in the world  
to what we have received.**