

**Father Brad Neely**  
**Easter Sunday: April 24, 2011**  
**Sts. Peter and Paul / Holy Trinity**  
**Acts 10: 34a, 37-43; Col 3: 1-4; Jn 20-1-9**

The Gospel of John presented to us by the Church this Easter morning focuses on the empty tomb of Jesus. We hear the mention of *darkness* when Mary came to the tomb. *Darkness* and *light* are recurring themes for the Apostle John. **Christ** the *Light* comes into a *darkened* world, and brings it *true life*. Christ the Light is the dawn of a new era--- **the pivotal change** in the history of the world. God becoming human, and changing the course of salvation history, **IS** the center point of human existence.

When **John**, in his **Gospel**, said that Mary Magdalene went to the tomb in the *dark*, one way to interpret *darkness*, here, is to equate darkness to a world without faith. When Peter and the other disciple hurry to the tomb after Mary tells them what she found, we hear that *the light of faith* begins to bloom in the other disciple. It says, “. . . *he saw and believed.*” He saw the cloth that covered the head of Jesus, neatly rolled and off to the side, suggesting that the tomb was not robbed. The disciples came to a moment of **faith**, **faith** that God *had* a divine hand in the scene of the empty tomb.

The absolute center of human history is **Christ**.  
Christ's empty tomb

is the "center point of the center point."  
The center of human history---  
the birth of Jesus the Messiah---  
the ministry Jesus the Messiah,  
and the death of Jesus the Messiah---  
reaches **its heart—its core**,  
with the **RESURRECTION** of Jesus the Messiah.  
All human history flows from  
this moment of resurrection:  
---the past, the present, and the future.  
Not stopping there,  
Christ himself invites us  
to join Him in this center point of human  
existence,  
this heart of salvation.

A few days ago, for the daily Mass for Tuesday of Holy Week, the first reading was taken from the 49<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of Isaiah. This excerpt included:  
“ . . . *the Lord has spoken who formed me as his servant from the womb. . . .*” [Is 49: 1-6]  
We naturally understand from this, that God knows us in the womb. But let's go further, by recounting the words of the prophet Jeremiah:  
“**Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,**  
*before you were born I dedicated you. . . .*” [Jer 1:5]  
Not only does God know us in the womb, He knows us before we are in the womb.

It may sound like I am trailing off in another direction with Isaiah and Jeremiah, but here's the connection:  
If God knows us before we are even in the womb, Jesus knew each one of us as he walked the earth---taught, performed miracles---

was arrested, suffered his passion---  
and died on the cross.  
He knew each one of us  
when he rose from the state of death.  
So, we can really say,  
that not only did Christ sacrifice His life for  
*us*,  
we can say that He sacrificed his life  
for me/you personally,  
whom he already *knew*.

The center of Christ's resurrection  
is true *light* and true *life*.  
And this is the *faith*  
which we profess and celebrate today.