

Easter Vigil 2008

Fr. Robert VerEecke, S.J.

How dare we speak of life when we are surrounded by so much death in our world.

How dare we speak of peace when we are still at war and innocent lives are being lost every day?

How dare we speak of hope for the future when so many of our personal hopes and dreams have been shattered?

How dare we speak of freedom tonight, when so many are not free to live in

How dare we speak of joy this night when so many suffer so much pain and loss?

How dare we?

Sometimes we dare when deep down we really are afraid of what's out there.

We call it "bravado". We pretend to be "daredevils" because really we are scared to death or scared of death.

Perhaps we dare because deep down we are afraid that what we claim to have happened in the living and dying and rising of Jesus really doesn't make a difference in our world and in our lives. Perhaps we dare because we are afraid that the radical disintegration of a community's hopes and dreams of which JA spoke on Holy Thursday cannot possibly be "Reintegrated", "renewed", "reborn", "resurrected". Perhaps we fear that our songs and stories and dances and ritual actions are just beautiful songs and stories and dances and ritual actions and nothing else. Because if we're looking for evidence of Jesus' resurrection and the impact that one single, world-changing upside down event has had on our world in 2000 years, we'll have a challenging time finding the evidence in a world that is even more violent and unjust than it was in Jesus' time

Or perhaps we dare because deep down we are not afraid. We dare to speak of life's victory over death in Jesus because we have been to the empty tomb and heard the words that dare the devil, dare death itself. He is risen. He is not here. And somewhere, somehow deep down we know, we know, we know and we can echo the woman's words who discovered the empty tomb, We Have Seen the lord.

Tonight We dare to speak of life and peace and hope and freedom and joy because deep down, despite our doubts and fears we have experienced life and peace and joy and hope and freedom, somewhere, somehow, with someones, and especially and hopefully around the table of God's word and in Eucharist.

And so, Jess, Susan, Bopha, Laurel, We dare to speak of life and peace and joy and freedom and hope because you are daredevils. You take the plunge into the water of life, daring death itself because Jesus was the first to find the victory of life over death.