

Amazement: the Door to New Life

*"This is the day the Lord has made:
let us rejoice and be glad!"*

Prayer

*Lord Jesus,
all creation exults because
through your resurrection
you have broken
the chains of death.
Grant us the joy of living
from now on
the newness of life you
won for us at such
a high price:
your death on the cross.
May our amazement
at your resurrection
become a permanent part
of our existence,
enabling us to savor
at every moment of life
the joy that springs
from this salvific event,
so that nothing
will disturb us or detach us
from the will of the Father.
Amen.*



The joy of Easter is triggered by our amazement at Christ's loving fulfillment of his promise. Peter and John raced to the tomb but came to an abrupt halt when they reached it, amazed at the sign of Love's victory over egoism; of Life's victory over death. This faith-filled amazement should characterize our relationship with Christ. Only if we allow ourselves to be amazed by the love of God—a love that does not follow the rules of self-interest, of "what's in it for me"—only then will we be able to savor Easter to the full and live as redeemed persons, free children of God in the Son.

How can we let this amazement to pervade us? By welcoming the Word of God and living it in our daily lives, aware that we are part of the people of God, the Church. This wisdom allows us to recognize the signs of the times through which God continues to reveal his fidelity to his Covenant with humanity. Our faith is constantly reinvigorated by the amazement that springs from our understanding of Scripture, which enables us to see the signs of God in the story of humanity and believe in his love. The new life we are called to share, thanks to the faithful love of God, is that of the redeemed and the saved—those whose garments have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. It is the new life of believers who live the experience of God's people, the Church—the sole place in which our faith can be fully expressed.

Easter opens the door to new life, not in an individual and subjective way, but by means of a personal faith-experience that is part of the journey of the whole people of God. This is the true amazement generated by the resurrection: that faith in the risen Christ enables us to consider our life no longer from within the limits of our subjective experience. Instead, our personal relationship with God makes it possible for us to build relations with others in which our search for self-fulfillment necessarily involves helping our neighbor attain the same goal. The new life offered to us as we gaze with amazement at the empty tomb transforms our existence into a credible sign of faith—a witness to the love of God, to the victory of good over evil. We can and must allow ourselves to be filled with amazement, which means we must be ready to shed the arrogance of subjectivism and clothe ourselves with the benevolence of fraternity—a lesson that can be learned by coming to an abrupt halt to contemplate the signs of the love of Christ.