

# Easter Sunday

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Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[ 0 : 00 ] Our epistle text begins with those words here in Colossians 3, verse 3. Where we read, Having been buried with Christ in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God who raised him from the dead.

In baptism, we were buried with Christ. And in baptism, we are raised to new life with Christ. This is what we witnessed this morning with the baptism of little Izzy.

But baptism is not the end of our Christian pilgrimage. Confirmation is not a graduation from going to church. St. Paul says that having been raised with Christ, our life is now a journey.

A journey of growing as we walk the road of grace and holiness with our Savior. So how do we grow? St. Paul says, Set your mind on things above, not on the things of this earth.

What he means is that our values and our life should be radically different than that of the world.

The world says, Strive to make yourself happy at all costs.

[ 1 : 44 ] Strive in the pursuit of money as your ultimate goal in order to live for retirement.

Manipulate others for power to get ahead.

Make it your ambition to put family above all things, even church. But the Christian faith says, Yes, working hard and family are certainly important.

But our number one goal is to live, to grow in the grace that we received in holy baptism. Therefore, the exhortation to set your minds on things above is another way of saying, Seek Christ first in all things.

So allow me to be a little blunt this morning. The number one priority for little Izzy is to grow in the grace and holiness of our Lord.

This takes precedence over money, over sports. I say that because she comes from a very athletic gene pool, as most of you know. And the pursuit of holiness takes priority even over her own wants and desires.

[ 2 : 59 ] Striving for holiness breeds true joy and gives her a true, real purpose in life. Friends, self-indulgence creates a loss of identity and a loss of purpose.

And that is what we see in our culture today. A loss of purpose. Therefore, the baptismal font is Izzy's and it's our entrance into the kingdom of God.

And just as a house becomes more and more of a home through the time we spend feasting and fellowshiping with family and friends, so the church becomes more of our refuge as we feed on Christ in the Holy Eucharist with our brothers and sisters in the faith.

Being buried with Christ and raised with him in baptism means that Izzy's life and our lives are hidden in God.

St. Paul goes on to say here in Colossians chapter 3 verse 4, For you died and your life is hidden. It is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, appears, then you will also appear with him in glory.

[ 4 : 25 ] Baptism is our participation in the triumph of Easter, the physical and bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are hidden with Christ in God, meaning we have been buried with Christ in baptism.

And the hope of glory is what we will all receive that last day when we will be raised with Christ to share in his glory forever.

Therefore, being in Christ means we are members of his body, which means we do not live aimlessly, catering to our own wants and passions, which is what today all we hear about.

Such a futile life only ends in regret, despair, and total alienation from our God. Satan seeks to entice us away from Christ, away from his word, by tempting us towards a life of self-indulgence, because Satan's only aim is to destroy you.

As baptized Christians, we have been put on the narrow path to walk in the way of God that begins again in baptism.

[ 5 : 51 ] He claimed us as his own. He put his name upon us. Therefore, we are to have our hearts and minds focused upon the eternal, not upon the fleeting things of this temporal life.

Easter, then, is not simply about Jesus defeating death in the grave by way of his resurrection, although that is certainly true. Easter is about Christ raising us up from death to new life in holy baptism as we share in this Easter joy, as he has given us a new purpose, a new goal in life.

Our calling, then, as children of God, birthed in the waters of holy baptism is that we now make it our priority, our purpose in this life, to long for the glory that is to be revealed when we too shall be raised physically from death and the grave.

this is to be little Izzy's goal, her aim in life, and this is to be our goal and our focus throughout our lives.

Amen. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed.