

7 June, 2012

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

This morning we continue our examination of what we believe as Anglican Christians. Last week we looked at Christ's descent to the dead. This week we look at Jesus' triumph over death with his resurrection. Article 4 of the Articles of Religion is "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again His body, with flesh, bones and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherefore He ascended into heaven, and there sits until He returns to judge all men at the last day."

In the sixteenth century it was essential to affirm the literal and physical resurrection of Jesus. Death was a daily reality for the people who were not sheltered from death the way that we are. The assurance of Jesus' triumph over death and His resurrection reminded believers of the resurrection from the dead that awaits them upon their death.

In the twenty-first century it is equally important for us to daily affirm the literal and physical resurrection of Jesus and his ascension into heaven for several reasons:

First, to reaffirm our own faith in the resurrection from the dead. Just as Jesus rose from the dead, the promise of the gospel is that we too will rise from the dead. When we give our lives to Christ, His promise to us is that when we take our last breath on earth the very next second we will take our first sweet breath in heaven with Jesus.

Second, in an era where we believe we are so advanced, the rumors and innuendos of the first century are making their comeback. These include rumors which promote the idea that there was no real resurrection, and that it was all a hoax. They also include rumors that there was no real resurrection but that the people of the first century "believed" there was a resurrection. They argue that the church was formed on the belief of those first Christians so it doesn't really matter if there was a resurrection as long as they believed there was. The truth is that the real and literal resurrection of Jesus from the dead does matter! The disciples believed because Jesus appeared to them in the upper room (John chapters 20-21) as well as to many others: "Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive." (1 Corinthians 15:6) This past Easter



Season we examined many of the twelve different resurrection appearances of Jesus. Because the first Christians had experiences with the risen Lord, their lives were transformed and they were willing to make the greatest sacrifice when put to the test.

We too can encounter the risen Lord and our lives are also changed and transformed! We encounter Jesus when we spend time in His Word; we encounter Jesus when we receive the sacraments; we encounter Jesus when we serve the lost, the poor, the sick and alone - "as you did it to the least of these you did it to me." (Matthew 25)

These are the encounters that transform our lives and shape our world view - all because Jesus really did Rise from the Dead and Ascend into heaven where he sits at the right hand of the Father interceding on our behalf day in and day out. Jesus' resurrection and ascension are fundamental doctrines of the church that are real not because we believe in them; we believe in them because they are real...and to that I say AMEN.

Godspeed,

Bishop Menees

### **Diocesan Calendar**

**June 9th** - Standing Committee

**June 10th** - Bishop @ St. David's in San Rafael

**June 12th** - Rural Deans

**June 16th** - Diocesan Council

**June 17th** - Bishop @ St. Alban's in Los Banos

**July 1st** - Bishop @ St. Andrew's In Lancaster

**July 2nd - July 10th** - Bishop Menees on Vacation

**July 8-14th** - Family Camp @ ECCO

**July 10th** - Rural Deans at 10:00 a.m.

**July 15 - 21st** - Camp H2O

**July 15th** - Bishop @ Good Shepherd in Reedley

**July 21st** - Diocesan Council @ 10:00 a.m.

**July 22nd** - Bishop @ St. Jude's in Tehachapi

**July 24th - July 28th** - Camp San Joaquin High School Camp

**July 29th - August 2nd** - Camp San Joaquin Youth Camp

**August 3rd-5th** - Anglican Women's Retreat

**August 5th** - Bishop @ St. Timothy's in Bishop

**August 9-10** - Provincial Hispanic Ministry Conference. at the Cathedral, "Caminemos Juntos"

**October 5-7th** - Clergy Wives Retreat @ ECCO

**October 27th** - Honored Women's Luncheon

**November 2-3** - Diocesan Convention @ St. James Cathedral

