

A Reflection for Easter

“Set your hearts on things above.”

- Col 3:1, NIV

Easter is the event that confirms the wisdom teaching of the heart that leads to holiness. Easter celebrates Jesus' resurrection from the dead—*and* his return to us. The Risen Jesus *returns* to reach out to those who abandoned and rejected him. His resurrected life continues the mission he lived prior to his resurrection. Jesus's resurrection confirms his ministry and reveals to us the essential characteristics for living: returning to God; welcoming the sinner; and forgiving. These are the windows to holiness.

How we live *now, in this life* is an indication of how we will live *then, in the new resurrected life*. When Saint Paul tells us to “set your hearts on things above” he is not talking about “a pie in the sky when you die.” He is talking about embracing enduring values and a greater level of awareness NOW. Saint Paul says that this is a matter of the heart, of the whole person.

This is different from worldly philosophies that believe that knowledge is power or that you will be rewarded for good behavior. Heaven is not a reward for good behavior when you die. Heaven is an inheritance that you can experience now. Saint Catherine of Siena said, “All the way to Heaven is Heaven, because He is the way.”

Our life is a journey that flows from where we set our heart. My heart holds my relationship to God—in mystery, paradox, questions, pain, grace, gratitude—until it transforms me and gives me new life.

For Catholic health care, belief in the Resurrection is more than the words we say, it is about the way we respond to others NOW. Our ministry is made manifest in what others experience when they encounter us TODAY.

In the way I serve others, is my heart set on things above?

How will the hearts of those I serve be touched?

Will they experience an empty tomb or encounter Resurrected life?