

April 1, 2012

Passion/Palm Sunday

Gospel: Mark Chapter 14

In some sense, we are about to “Wake” Jesus, Son of Mary and Joseph and Son of God.

Today we recall his passion and his death.

I have just returned from a wake in Omaha—an eventful journey. I returned to honor Father Mel Merwald, who was my assistant pastor at St. James Parish in Omaha and a wonderful, warm, and caring human being and a very fruitful priest, as witnessed by the overflowing church at his funeral.

Wake time is story telling time, and one of the stories told of Father Mel was when his cousin needed a new kidney. Father Mel, on his own initiative had himself tested and discovered that his own kidney would be an even better match than that of his cousin’s sister. He informed his cousin he would give his kidney. His cousin said “No way!” But Mel insisted. This little story tells a lot about his life.

While in Omaha, I had an incident, passing out at his funeral and spending 24 hours in the hospital being observed. They even scanned my brain and found nothing! I was cleared: no heart attack, no stroke, Thank God.

So wake time is story telling time. For the Celtic Prayer Book, I wrote this poem prayer about the waking of Jesus:

Wake time, sorrow sharing time

Wake time story telling time

Wake time vigil keeping time

Wake time embracing time.

Lady of the Wake, our life,

Lady of the Wake our sweetness

Lady of the Wake, our hope in loss,

Lady of the Wake, our refuge in tears

Wake time, a thin time,

Wake time in a thin place,

Wake time tears and laughter, very close

Wake time, here and hereafter closer still.

Lady of the Wake you waked Mamma Anne

Lady of the Wake you waked Papa Joachim

Lady of the Wake you waked beloved Joseph

Lady of the Wake you waked your own dear Son

Lady of Sorrows, hear the keening
Lady of Sorrows bless our stories
Lady of Sorrows smile at our laughter
Lady of Sorrows keeps watch with us.

Queen of heaven reach through thin time
Queen of Heaven reach beyond death's time
Queen of Heaven, you were there at death's parting
Queen of heaven now give glory's greeting.

This is the week we call Holy. We watch with Mary and with John at the cross and at the tomb.

*We gather the folks,
We break the bread.
We tell the stories.*

*Let us go up to Jerusalem to watch with Jesus,
to wake with Mary, John, and Magdalene.
Good Friday's dark is closest to Easter Light!*