

In Greece and many parts of the Christian East, you hear it at the start of the evening news and at the beginning of public announcements:

Χριστὸς ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη! (Khristós Anésti! Alithós Anésti!)

People greet each other in the same way, and in some parts of Eastern Europe and Russia - they exchange a triple kiss on the cheeks.

Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

This greeting permeates every aspect of peoples' lives for the next 50 weeks until the end of the Easter Season.

That might seem a bit over-the-top to our secularized mentality as 21st century Americans ... or maybe at the least, the triple kiss thing ... but today is Easter, and indeed - Christ is risen.

What we may be missing if we don't recognize the significance of this day is that Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross, and His victory not only over sin, but over death itself ... And ... well ... that sort of ... changes everything.

And if it doesn't sink in for us, think back to the Gospel story we just heard from St. John's Gospel. Mary Magdalen has reported to the Apostles that she has seen the risen Christ.

They're thinking she's slipped a cog or two. In fact, out of the remaining eleven Apostles, only Peter takes off running, followed by John. John must have had his running shoes on, because Scripture tells us that he gets to the tomb first ... and waits for Peter, who goes in first.

And the Gospel tells us that:

*they did not yet understand the Scripture
that [Jesus] had to rise from the dead.*

These are the Apostles - who spent the last three years living with Jesus. And they are still not getting this. But nonetheless, we are told that:

[they] saw and believed.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us set aside any lack of understanding we may have ... any misunderstandings we may have about Jesus ... let us tap into the graces of our Baptism - the supernatural graces of Faith, Hope, and Love ... and let us truly "see" and "believe."

Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen.

And ... that ... changes ... everything.

Happy Easter!