

## Easter Life

Life is filled with struggles - it's an imperfect world and will always be imperfect. Often we find ourselves stuck in negative cycles, negative attitudes, and negative views of life.

Disappointments are felt. Resentments move in. Complaints become strong and prevalent. Uncertainty, change, loss; masks, quarantine, social distance and uncertainty. It becomes overwhelming. It's hard to see anything but negative. But only seeing negative and disappointment is not an accurate and complete view of life.

Henri Nouwen, priest and spiritual writer reminds us *“Gratitude in its deepest sense means to live life as a gift to be received gratefully. But gratitude as the gospel speaks about it embraces all of life: the good and the bad, the joyful and the painful, the holy and the not so holy.*

*Jesus calls us to gratitude. He calls us to recognize that gladness and sadness are never separate, that joy and sorrow really belong together, and that mourning and dancing are part of the same movement. That is why Jesus calls us to be grateful for every moment that we have lived and to claim our unique journey as God's way to mold our hearts to greater conformity with God's own.”* A Spirituality of Living by Henri J.M. Nouwen

Easter allows us to see life in the true balance of good and bad, negative and positive, joy and sorrow...they always are together. Sometimes one is harder to see than the other. The journey often is long. In the journey we learn and grow. And “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth.” Job 19:25 (NIV) It's the power and promises of God. It's the truth of life as children of God. Grace, gratitude, God's constant presence “He is risen indeed, hallelujah!”

~ Rev. Dr. Rick Armstrong | Guest Writer

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