

## **Easter 2009**

**“HE IS NOT HERE, HE HAS RISEN”**

(Walk around the congregation asking, Where is the body of Jesus?)

**On one bright, sunny morning, when the light of dawn peered over the Mount of Olives, with rays of the sun filtering through the fragrant orange and olive blossoms and with the floor of the garden of Gethsemane radiating with the white Lilies of the Valley; several women made their way to a tomb to do for Jesus that for which they could not do on the past Friday-to prepare His body for a proper burial. Upon approaching the sepulcher and, to the women’s amazement, the huge stone had been rolled away, the body of the crucified one was gone and angelic figures sat arrayed in dazzling white. The Men said,**

**WHY Seek Ye The Living Among The Dead. Luke 24:5.**

**Several years ago as I looked East & West of the rivers in our area, I saw a vast thong of children outside a huge structure of concrete and steel. Lean and gaunt, the light had gone from their eyes and there was no more laughter. WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?**

**Around the corner, I saw men of all ages gathered near an open fire, feeding on their broken dreams, lost hopes and crushed aspirations. Inside boarded-up apartments, I saw young men with glassy eyes, slurred speech and needled arms, huddled in the corners of their trapped minds; trying to get over the river-of-no-return on a sinking ship. WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?**

**In abandoned neighborhoods along desolate stretches of dimly lit streets, I saw women and young girls selling their wares for some glimmer of hope and survival for themselves and their children. WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?**

**In vast halls of schools in disrepair, I saw children milling around, hungry for the knowledge locked up in the nearest books, DVDs and VCRs but unable or disinterested in finding the key to unlock the vast knowledge. WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?**

**On street buses, I heard loud youths spitting out hot hatred and in whose eyes I saw the violence of lost hope, the devastation of false pride and the shame of neglected guidance. WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?**

**Across the area, far to the East, West, North and South, I saw vast stretches of land with huge estates separated from the shattered glass and bombed out buildings of the inner cities. And, in stained glassed houses in all areas, I heard vast choirs of choirs singing hymns of a promised land of glory while many experienced downsizing, broken homes and an uncertain future. WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?**

**If we can not find him in the tomb in Gethsemane, then where is He? Let us stop looking for him among the dead in tombs. Let us realize that Christ is with those gaunt and lean children. We'll never see Him if we focus on their lack of laughter.**

**He is with the men around the open fire, but not if we or they feed only on their broken dreams. He's with the young men with glassy eyes, but not if they seek Him in their drunken stupors. He is with the women and the young girls, but they'll never find Him through desecrated their bodies. He's with those children hungry for knowledge, but they will not find him if they do not use the keys of opportunities to unlock that knowledge. He's with the loud youths on those buses, but not in the boisterousness of their violence outcries.**

**He is with the folks East, West, North and South, but not to be found in an aloof religion or in their hidden fears. He is present both in the shattered glass and bombed out buildings in the inner cities and in the stained glass houses, but they'll never know it if they ignore his presence in the midst of humanity suffering and human joy and celebrations**

**On this day, several women went to the tomb but the tomb was empty. The Easter messengers then told them: Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.**

**He lives! He lives whenever and wherever there is human need and suffering. Jesus Christ lives in the midst of life: in all of our joys and all of our sorrows. Let us seek him in all of life's variations. Let us pray that His will be done for all of us. Let us accept his offering of new life to us. Let us look for Him in the resurrected life, hidden with Christ in God, and revealed as He appears this and every Easter morning. He lives! He Lives! He lives! And so, I say to you:**

**“He is risen!” And you will respond to me with, “The Lord is risen indeed!”**

**HAPPY RESURRECTION DAY! HAPPY EASTER.**