

- Blessed are we who come in the name of the Lord!
- Blessed are we who have a King whose idea of a triumphant entry into His Kingdom is on the foal of a donkey.
- Blessed are we who have a King who allows Himself to be condemned for our sins.
- Blessed are we who have the Good News of the Light and Life of the Resurrection which the darkness of the cross could not subdue.
- Blessed are we who come in the name of the Lord-who can come through the darkness into the light of His Resurrection.

I remember the 2.5 year nursing school program that I was required to complete in 1 year under the intense Psychiatric Technician Training Program at Atascadero State Hospital. This was the preliminary requirement to working at Atascadero State Hospital as a Pre-Licensed Psychiatric Technician. It involved a grueling year of intense academic study of Basic Nursing, Psychiatric Nursing, Pharmaceutical training and Nursing to those with Developmental Disabilities. In those days successful completion of the year long pre-requisite course bought you a guaranteed full-time position inside the Hospital as a Pre-Licensed Psych Tech. The final and most dreaded, yet necessary hurdle was the ability to pass the California Board of Licensed Vocational and Psychiatric Technician Exam (A.K.A State Boards) in order to become a Licensed Psychiatric Technician and thereby guarantee yourself a long-term, permanent position which enabled you to pass medications and perform all the other duties that only Licensed versus Pre-Licensed Psychiatric Technicians are authorized to perform.

Once I completed the year-long training and became a PLPT I was assigned to a unit inside the hospital where I would spend every available moment studying for the dreaded Board Exam. This exam had a daunting reputation of being not just long but also timed. So, when the long-awaited and dreaded day of testing came I felt as though I had done everything in my power to study and commit massive amounts of material to memory. As I began to take the test with its 3 hour time limit I soon became appreciative of its daunting reputation. By the time I got close to the 3-hour mark I could tell I was not going to have enough time to complete all the questions at the pace I was going and so I rapidly began guessing my way through the answers in order to get through the final part of the exam. To make matters even worse, they would not reveal your results to you at the testing site-you had to wait for those to be sent from the State Board via “snail mail,” even though the proctors at the testing site knew whether or not you had passed.

As I left the testing facility, I was devastated with a feeling of bitter despair that there was no way I had passed, and I began to think, ‘My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?’ I had the feeling I had done an excruciating amount of work and preparation which had all been for naught. This feeling continued over the next month as I awaited receipt of my results in the mail.

Luckily, thanks to a lot of prayer and having spent the majority of my life feeding on the Spirit of Christ in the Eucharist, I was reminded by that same Spirit of Her presence with me then, the whole time I had been taking the exam, and always. I therefore knew God had a reason for why I was going through all of this and that it was just part of a journey toward what turned out to be a delightful resurrection contained in the joyfully rewarding news that I had indeed passed the exam and was now a LPT.

This is just my own story and example of how the Holy Spirit can empower us to walk through the darkness of despair into the light of hope-through the shadow of doubts and fears into the light of faith and resurrection. Imagine how Jesus must have felt riding into Jerusalem on the that donkey knowing what lie ahead for Him in less than a week's time; he no doubt drew His strength from the Holy Spirit combined with His faith in the knowledge that His Father was always with Him and would never leave Him and in the power of the resurrection which the darkness of the Cross had no chance to contain.

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ, shortly we will be feeding yet again on the Spirit of Christ in the Bread and Wine of the Eucharist where we will be filled with the power of the Light of His Spirit and Resurrection, empowering us to pick up our crosses and follow Jesus into His Movement toward the Dream and the Kingdom of God on earth where His Divine Justice will ultimately rule and everyone will shout out "Blessed are we who come in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the Highest, Hosanna in the Highest heaven"-come down on earth, Amen.