

A doctor was beginning the checkup of his new patient. "How old are you?" the doctor asked. "Sixty-five." "And how are you feeling today?" "I feel fine. I'm in excellent health. I jog three miles a day, and I recreate often with my family." "I see," said the doctor. "Well, let's just take a personal history. When was it you said your father died?" "Did I say my father died?" The doctor was embarrassed. "No, no, I just presumed--." "My father is eighty-five years old. He's in excellent health. He plays golf every day and can still please his wife in bed." "Well, that's amazing. I'm sorry I asked. Tell me, then, how is it you said your grandfather died?" "Did I say my grandfather died?" "No, no, I--." "My grandfather is a hundred five years old. He's in excellent health. He walks a mile every day and just got married to a woman twenty-five years old." "Well, that's incredible," said the doctor. "But tell me one thing. Why would a man your grandfather's age want to get married?" "Did I say my grandfather *wanted* to get married?"

Easter is the feast of new life. No matter how old or young we are, this is the feast of rebirth. Tonight Jesus is risen! At Christmas Jesus is born to become like us. Tonight we are born to become like him.

Without Easter, we might give up on new life. Without Easter, we might think we're always going to be the person we've always been. And yes, we all need rebirth; none of us is as perfect as we think we are. Last week I called a priest I was supposed to pick up at the airport; we had never met before. He said, "How will I know you when I see you?" I said, "You won't have any trouble at all; I'm tall, muscular, handsome, and cast an imposing figure." It took us an hour to find each other.

We are not the person we think we are. We all need rebirth, but we resist because we're comfortable with our old habits. Our habits are like training wheels on a bike. We resist taking them off.

These men and women, these elect and candidates, take off their training wheels tonight and come to communion. Tonight they resist no longer. Tonight Jesus rises there! Tonight God creates them anew.

The Easter Vigil begins with the story of creation. God takes nothing and creates something. God takes seed and creates a flower. God takes clay and creates humans. And tonight God takes a tomb and creates resurrection.

Is there a tomb inside you? Training wheels you've kept on too long? Are you able to let them go?

Without Easter we might think we have to let them go all by ourselves. But we don't have to. We are not the Creator. We are the creation. The Creator, not creation, will free us. Who made you? God made you. Who makes you? God makes you.

Whether we are five or a hundred five, God will make us again and again, if we just let go, if we just don't resist, if we just, just die--die to who we were, and rise to who we are: the Body of Jesus Christ.