

2024 Easter B

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Several times in the last few weeks I have heard almost the same sentence said. The only difference was the subject of the sentence.

“Blank is early this year.”

Any guesses?

Easter...and ice out.

Ice out is one of those things we note, this time of year. Along with the first robin, and the tiny green shoots of crocus and snowdrops poking up. Ice out is one of nature’s promises that spring is coming. That the days—and nights—are warming up so that the lake now covered with ice will be warm enough (for some of us, at least) to immerse ourselves in it, too cool off after a long hot day.

I commented to a friend that with all the warm weather, ice out is early this year, and he could only laugh. He’s a city boy, grew up in Newark, NJ. He understood what I meant, but he heard...

Something more gangstery. Like the mob had put out a hit on the lakes. “Gonna ice ‘em out...early this year.”

The authorities of Jesus' day thought they had successfully iced him out, didn't they? Shut him up, shut him out, shut him into a tomb...

Those in power, both religious and secular, had "iced" him so that he would no longer be a challenge to their control of the people.

The disciples believed he had been iced out, too. And not just by those authorities. They had to admit that they, too, had in some sense iced him out. They deserted him the minute trouble arose. They left him to die, buried under the weight of the ice of sin and death.

But Jesus won't stay buried. Not under the ice. Not in the tomb.

Jesus emerges and brings new life and hope to us all.

Easter morning was a kind of "ice out" for all who believe. The Resurrection of Jesus melts the ice that keeps our hearts and souls frozen, unable to move. It calls us back into life. New life, new growth, new beginnings.

Ice out is early this year. So is Easter.

May your alleluias lift your hearts and souls, fill you with as much joy as that moment when you see "ice out!"

Amen.