

Easter Sunday C2022

Today we celebrate the greatest event of our salvation and the founding feast of our faith, that is, the resurrection of Jesus. Debaters may keep asking questions about the resurrection of Jesus, and moviemakers raise polemics about his tomb or his remains, but nothing can destroy the truth, as we find it described in today's readings, that Jesus Christ is alive, that God raised him from the dead.

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, there would never be faith in him, and Christianity would never have existed. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, people would have perhaps talked of him as they do with some historical personalities of world history. But, that would have been just a chapter in the books of history and nothing more.

It is because Jesus Christ is alive that we are gathered in his name this morning to praise God and thank him for the gift of life he has given us in raising him from the dead. Jesus is our Savior and redeemer. Peter said it clearly in the Acts of the Apostles: "This man who the Jews hung on a tree, God raised him on the third day and granted him to be visible".

The apostles were witnesses of what happened to him. They were with him before and after his resurrection; they ate and drank with him; they heard his teaching and saw his miracles. They saw him dead, but they also saw him raised. It is that witness which they have transmitted to us so that we, too, may believe and come to eternal life.

The Gospel of this morning describes what happened that "first day of the week" and how, when everything seemed to have ended in failure, God intervened and raised our Lord from the dead. Mary Magdalene, Peter and John who went to the tomb in the early morning of that day could not believe with their eyes: the Lord is risen. The stone is removed from the tomb; the burial cloths trailed on the ground and the tomb was empty. While Mary Magdalene thought, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb", and Peter did not know what to do, John, who saw also, quietly believed.

On Easter Sunday, there is nothing to see; there is only one thing to do, namely to believe that no grave has the power to prevent God's life to spring out and reach out to us. On Easter morning only faith can make us understand that nothing is impossible to God, that the risen Christ leads us from death to life, making us new creatures pleasing to his Father.

Easter is the celebration of life in all its fullness. Christ's resurrection means that the grave is no more a place where death is closed up behind a stone. The stone of death has been removed forever from the tomb. The risen Christ has destroyed forever the reign of death. He has promoted life and consecrated all those who believe in him to eternal life and to rejoice with him in his kingdom.

Christ's resurrection means that our own physical death is not an obstacle to the flourishing of God's life in us. Like Christ, when we die God gives us life anew, since we believe and are baptized in him. Christ himself makes us participate in his own resurrection. His resurrection is our resurrection. That is the good news of Easter, namely that no matter what we suffer, no matter how badly we have it, no matter what tragedies we face – even death itself – we will be raised up.

Because of Jesus and his resurrection, there is a light for us at the end of the tunnel. There are no more borders we cannot cross between death and life. Of course, we know by human experience that light is often difficult to see, especially when we are overwhelmed

with problems and difficulties. When there seems to be no end to our struggles, when every road we take comes to a dead end, when suffering continues to pull us down, our inclination is not to believe in light, but to curse the darkness. But it is exactly at that moment that Easter's promise tells that the night of our situation can be changed into light. It may take great courage, but Easter pushes us to raise our eyes in hope and wait with trust for our redemption. No matter what we endure, God will raise us up. This is the message of Easter.

So, we understand that there is a reason for every problem we face on earth and a lesson to learn in every suffering we endure. If God closes us a door, he can open for us a window. There is never a Good Friday without Easter. Easter affirms that we will never be abandoned, that nothing is ever hopeless. No matter how difficult we will have it, Easter tells us: it will be ok. Happy Easter to all!

Acts 10: 34a, 37-43; Colossians 3: 1-4; John 20: 1-9



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