

Easter Sunday C

The resurrection of Christ is the centerpiece of Christian faith. It is the key to interpreting the life of Christ. Without this victory over death, as St. Paul says, “Our preaching is useless and your faith is in vain.” (1Cor. 15:14) The death and resurrection of Christ is the foundation of our faith. Though Christmas seems to be a greater celebration externally, we wouldn’t be celebrating Christmas today if Christ had not risen from the dead. Every aspect of our faith derives its meaning from the resurrection of Christ. Furthermore, it is the sure guarantee of our own future resurrection. We would still be in darkness and sin if it was not for the resurrection of Christ. Easter is the celebration of our redemption and, therefore, the celebration of thanksgiving and joy. The resurrection of Christ is so important that it has been preached from the beginning of Christianity. Christ showed himself to the Apostles and many others after his resurrection. The disciples proclaimed the risen Christ, and his resurrection became the nucleus of their preaching. Even after 20 centuries, we still announce the same message to the world: that Christ is alive. Christ lives. Therefore, we too shall live. We shall live with him forever.

There is a remarkable true story of a little boy about his version of the resurrection. During the family dinner, everyone was asked to share what they understood by “resurrection.” When it was the turn of 7-year-old Jimmy Rogers, he said, “One day after we all die, the angel of God will call out our names from the book kept in heaven. First he will call Daddy Rogers, and daddy will answer ‘Here I am.’ Then he will call Mommy Rogers, and Mommy will answer, ‘Here I am.’ Then he will call Susie and Martin Rogers, and they will answer ‘Here I am.’ And then the angel will call my name, and I shall say loud and clear, ‘Here I am.’ A few months later, Jimmy met with a car accident and was badly hurt. He was unconscious with no movement, and the doctors said that he was not going to make it. That day the whole family gathered around his bed to pray. While they prayed, the boy began to stir a bit, and the family came closer and looked at him full of tears but very excited. His lips started to move, and they all clearly heard him say ‘Here I am.’ Then he was still again.

If there is a message that Easter Sunday proclaims, it is: “Christ lives and so we shall live.” This is the great truth that fills our faith with meaning. Jesus—who died on the cross—has risen. He has triumphed over death. He has overcome sorrow, anguish, and the power of darkness. In him we find everything. Outside him our life is empty. Outside him our life is in darkness. The resurrection is the great light for the world. “I am the light of the world,” said Jesus in John 8:12. He is the light for all ages of history, for every society, and for every person

Easter Vigil begins in total darkness, and when we come into the church it is dark. This reminds us of the darkness in which humanity was plunged without Christ. Then the celebrant proclaims, “May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of your minds and hearts” and lights the Easter candle that stands for Christ, the light. From the light of the Easter candle, we receive the light. The darkened church is now illumined with the light of our candles. The feast that we celebrate today is a powerful reminder to all of us that we need to carry this light of Christ to others. Our task as Christians is to proclaim Christ, the light, through what we say and do.

The feast of Easter gives us hope and encouragement in a world of pain, sorrow, and tears. If Christ can go through all those sufferings and come out victorious, we too can face the challenges of life and come out victorious with his help. The resurrection of Christ gives meaning to our lives. It gives us strength to fight against evil and temptations. Pains have now become bearable, hardships have become a sweet yoke, sadness is turned into joy, sorrow has become happiness, darkness has turned to light, and life is now worth living because Christ is risen. Alleluia, alleluia!