

EASTER 2021

In his Easter homily two years ago, Bishop Robert Barron suggested three reasons why the Resurrection of Jesus is Good News.

The first is that it shows that God's power and love are greater than the greatest of evils, greater even than death itself.

Our ordinary human experience tells us that everything dies.

living organisms from the smallest living cell to each of us human beings will all die;

empires come and go;

natural features, rivers, mountain ranges, planets, galaxies, even the universe itself will eventually come to an end.

We could say: death always wins.

The resurrection of Jesus says: no, it doesn't.

The second reason why the Resurrection of Jesus is Good News is that it shows that tyranny does not have the last word.

The Cross was the most painful, humiliating and horrific form of execution at the disposal of the Romans.

It said: step out of line, and this will happen to you.

There could be no starker warning to people living under the Roman Empire who might be tempted to break the law.

We might detect something of the horror the early Christians felt about crucifixion when St Paul says that Jesus was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.

Crucifixion says that tyranny and tyrannical power always win.

The resurrection of Jesus says: no, they don't.

The third lesson is that the Resurrection of Jesus means that the path of salvation has been opened to everyone, that there is hope for all people.

In his life on earth, and especially in his passion and death, Jesus went all the way down.

He journeyed into pain, despair, rejection, abandonment, even God-forsaken-ness.

He went as far away from the Father as it is possible to go.

He did so in order to reach all of those who have wandered away from God, away from the divine love.

In the light of the Crucifixion, even as we are running as fast as we can away from the Father, we are running into the arms of the Son.

Through his journey into suffering and death, Jesus has opened up the divine life for all people.

When he is lifted up on the Cross, he will draw all people to himself.

This is the hope that is born of the Cross and the Resurrection.

Christ can gather back to the Father everyone he has embraced through his suffering love.