

EASTER SUNDAY - 2022

A) THE EVENT OF THE RESURRECTION

- The Lord has truly risen. Alleluia!
- This is the Good News that is celebrated today throughout the world.
- The Resurrection of Jesus is the most extraordinary event that has ever happened.
- Yet nowhere in the Gospels is there a description of the resurrection itself.
- There are no eye-witness accounts
- The reason is because it is an event quite beyond our experience.
- Jesus did not return to the life he was living before.
- But he passed, beyond death, to a completely new life with God.

B) THE PREACHING OF THE RESURRECTION

- When Christians first preached the Gospel, they proclaimed Good News
- and the Good News they proclaimed was that God had raised Jesus from the dead
- and that he had appeared to various people after he had risen
- In their preaching, and in the stories they told, they witnessed to the truth of the resurrection:
- Yes, the Lord has truly risen.

C) THE RESURRECTION ACCOUNT IN JOHN

- The very first person to visit the tomb when the Sabbath is over is Mary Magdalene.
- She and the other women had accompanied Jesus in the last hours of his earthly life.
- They had witnessed his death and his burial.
- And Mary is the first one to whom Jesus appears after his resurrection
- Her love and her faithfulness are rewarded beyond all expectation
- But her first experience at the tomb is to find it empty, and she assumes that the grave has been robbed.
- She reports this to Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple
- They respond with great haste and run to the tomb.
- The Beloved Disciple gets there first looks inside the tomb, but then waits for Peter to catch up.
- He defers to the Apostle who is chief among them.
- And then we are given a very precise description of what the two men see:

- The linen cloths lying undisturbed, as though Christ's body in its rising had passed straight through them, leaving them where they were.
- The sight is enough to lead the Beloved Disciple to believe in the resurrection, but, it seems, not Peter.
- Maybe here too, as with Mary Magdalene, it is the one who loves much who receives much from the risen Christ.

D) WHY IS THE RESURRECTION "GOOD NEWS" FOR US?

- It is God's way of confirming everything that Jesus stood for.
- In Jesus, all of God's saving promises were fulfilled, and his Kingdom on earth was established.
- His way of living and speaking the truth in a spirit of love led inevitably to his death.
- But the resurrection was God's way of making valid and meaningful that way of life.
- The resurrection gives meaning to a life and death which would otherwise appear meaningless.
- The Resurrection also shows that God's love and power are greater than the greatest of evils, greater even than death itself.
- God is the God of the whole of humanity, who holds out to all of us the promise of life beyond death.
- The death of Jesus was not the end for him.
- Nor is our death the end of everything for us, but a gateway to a greater and better and fuller life with God.

E) HERE AND NOW

- Jesus' resurrection does not only concern our future happiness, but affects us here and now in this present life.
- God is with us now, within us now, giving us the power and the strength to live, in our ordinary lives, the life and values of the Kingdom.
- Our faith in the resurrection is a faith in new life, new hope, new beginnings; an optimism which never gives up, but keeps renewing itself each day.
- It enables us to go through all kinds of death and resurrection experiences here and now:
 - Experiences of change and transformation within ourselves;
 - Experiences in our relationships with others, in which we strive to heal, to forgive, to reconcile, to support and encourage.
 - However difficult these experiences may seem to us, the risen Jesus says to each one of us too: "Rejoice, do not be afraid."

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