

Easter Homily 2017

In Jesus time the people were oppressed by a foreign power that was unjust and cruel, especially to the poor. Corruption was ripe and no change was on the horizon. The value of people was measured by how much they could give to support the system. The present and the future were dark. Jesus gave the people hope. No wonder he is called the Light and that is why **Light** is the key theme of our Easter celebration.

You would be forgiven for believing that today we live in a world that has made little or no progress. Too often we hear of senseless killings and long term wars in which the innocent and the poor suffer the most. We still live in cultures that measure people only by their monetary value. Our freedom is reduced more and more by threats of abuse, health and safety laws, and the growing need for greater security. The rich get richer and poor get poorer. Corruption is everywhere. No wonder, then, that we, like the people of Jesus day, seek signs of Light and Hope with the desire to be freed from all that oppresses us. But this vision of the world is overly biased, it is warped, even if elements within it are true. It is a vision imposed on us by the media. The great deceiver, the Devil, does his job extremely well! Fortunately, Jesus came to reveal to us the true vision of ourselves, our world, creation and its people. He came to open HIS vision to us, that we might open HIS vision to others.

Just think!

If we focused on the kicks, scratches, and the wear and tear of a well-used door, we would fail to see the majesty and history of a door that has grown in wisdom and reverence throughout its long life. Only when we begin to respect and value the true worth of the door will its hidden riches begin to unravel before us. It has a wealth of stories to tell, stories filled with the humour and sorrow of life; of suffering and joy; how it had received its kicks and scratches. It has much it could teach us. However, most of all, it wants to tell you about its true maker, the author of its existence; to reveal to you that everything created reflects the inner beauty, goodness and love of its Creator. Jesus came to reveal this truth; to give this truth life. The door defends against false entry and welcomes those seeking friendship and acceptance, as well as those in need. No wonder then, that Jesus once called himself the DOOR to the sheepfold?

Like the women of the Gospel, we come to the tomb wondering how to roll the stone away, how to open that particular door. But Jesus, as always, is one step ahead. The tomb is open. Jesus is not there. Jesus has gone before you to Galilee, to your **Home**. And where is your Home? It is in your heart. Jesus has risen and yearns to enter your heart! Now it is your turn to open the door, to roll away the stone of fear and failure, of misdeeds, of harm and hurts, of worries and fears. So roll away the stone and let Jesus in.

And Jesus will enter with open arms, and, through the marks of his suffering, not blood but love will flow out like a light that embraces, stimulates, warms, and will fill you with a true Joy . . . a joy to be shared . . . to be sung . . . to be danced. For, wherever you walk from now on, you will leave behind you radiating drops of light and of love - of warmth and kindness - of mercy and compassion - of hope - and the feeling that it is **Oh so good to be alive!** You will be **Resurrection people**.

Yes. Jesus has risen indeed. Risen in you, in the lives of those around you and around the world. And wherever you look everything will sing Alleluia, Alleluia: the trees, the flowers, the grass, and, yes, even the weeds. You will hear and see the Alleluia in the face of every person you meet, in every step you take, in everything you see. For you will be transformed into the kind of resurrection person described by Eusebius, (a 3rd C. Church Father)

"May I be no one's enemy,

and a friend of all that which is eternal and abides.

May I never quarrel with those nearest me:

and if I do, may I be quickly reconciled!

May I love, seek, and attain only that which is good.

May I wish happiness for everyone and envy no one.

May I never rejoice in the ill-fortune of anyone who has wronged me!

When I have done or said what is wrong,

may I never wait for the rebuke of others,

but always rebuke myself until I make amends.

May I win no victory that harms either me or my opponent!

May I reconcile friends who are angry with one another!

May I never fail a friend who is in danger!

When visiting those in grief,

may I be able, by gentle and healing words, to soften their pain.

May I respect myself!

May I always keep tame that which rages within me!

May I accustom myself to be gentle,

and never be angry with people because of circumstances.

May I never discuss who is wicked and what wicked things he has done,

but know good people and follow in their footsteps." (END)

The world in which we live is full of people like this, like you? And, the more we become **Resurrection People**, the more the world will be healed and justice, mercy and peace be restored!

Yes, Jesus is risen! He is risen indeed! Let us rejoice: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!