

Easter Homily 2019

The resurrection did not come as a result of a clever human planning and calculation, or through knowing how to play the game, but it came after suffering, agony, unjust treatment and eventual death. God's ways are not our ways. Jesus who had the power and wisdom to know how to prevent this terrible treatment inflicted on him, accepted it. He accepted it, and in fact He longed for it, courageously without fear, because so deeply He loved us from His heart, and because this is why He came among us, to gather together the scattered children of God the Father, through His sacrificial death (cf. Jn 11:52). He knew that evil and death had no ultimate power or the last word in our human existence. He came among us from where there is no death and suffering and illness, so that He might win for us that same wonderful life which He enjoyed with the Father. He also knew and trusted that the heavenly Father would turn the work of evil around and would not leave Him in the realms of death. So Jesus and the Father allowed evil to demonstrate its full power, but only so that by Their divine wisdom They may defeat once and for all the full power of the enemy: death, and win for us the promise of resurrection. This is when we see how committed the love of the Father and the Son for us is; a love which is wise, which is enduring, which has no fear in it and which is not based on our merit, because we were still sinners while Jesus died for us on the cross, so that God might claim us back from slavery of the enemy to the freedom of His beloved children, as St. Paul says in his letter to the Romans (cf. Rom 5:8).

However if it is true that we are free through Jesus' death and resurrection, which I am convinced is true, then why is it that we still carry in ourselves spiritual bondages, addictions, etc.? Why do we still commit sins?

It is because Jesus' victory over the plot and lies of the enemy did not stop the enemy. Today just as in Jesus' time it continues to fill you with fear from doing what is the right thing in the eyes of the heavenly Father, and it discourages us to face challenges that are beyond us. He tempts you to develop negative attitudes and immobilises you by deep-seated anger or grudges in many different ways so much so that we treat these bondages or handcuffs as if they were normal or impossible to get rid of. The enemy also wants you to

defend yourself at any cost when someone accuses you unjustly, or to defend your comfort, your reputation, at any price and to put working and earning money as your main priority, instead of God and family.

However the resurrection is an encouragement not to be afraid or despondent when the Lord calls you to do something that seems to be beyond your capacity or seems to be terrifying. If He calls you to holiness, to a committed new life with Him, to renew your life and your relationship with people in His ways, He will definitely give you all the graces you need to live your new and free life with Him and to fulfil His plans; and His plans are always the best. He won these graces for you through the first Easter. Jesus has already paid the price for your new life.

You just need to discern and follow faithfully what the Father's will is. So take this Easter as an opportunity to start anew. Every new beginning has to be preceded by a heartfelt commitment, just like baptismal life and married life, in order to receive the graces of Easter for our new life. We have a young man in our Church at Sacred Heart, who is a wonderful witness of resurrected life. He as an 11 year old decided in January that he will start a new life with God. None of his family members come to church. He walks to church alone every Sunday. Seeing him kneeling with us at the altar of repose after the Holy Thursday Mass was such a heart-warming message to me from the heavenly Father, telling us that 'I am with you, I never gave up on you, and I will continue to raise my children and bring them back to me.' Thank you heavenly Father and Jesus, our Saviour! If a child can decide to renew his life, surely we adults can do the same.

[Only at the St. Peter's 11.30am Sunday Mass: Yesterday Jennifer made her commitment to live in a loving communion with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The binding force of love that will bound her with the Holy Trinity, that binding force, the grace of the Holy Spirit, came from the Death and resurrection of Jesus.]