

St Paul's in the Park Newsletter - Easter

Sacrifice

Princess Alice was the granddaughter of Queen Victoria. It is said that when William Gladstone was announcing the death of Princess Alice, he told a touching story to the House of Commons in Britain. The little daughter of the Princess was seriously ill with diphtheria. The doctors had told the Princess not to kiss her little daughter and endanger her own life. Once, when the child was struggling to breathe, the mother, forgetting herself entirely, took her daughter in her arms to comfort her. Gasping and struggling for her life the child said, 'Mummy, kiss me!' Without thinking of herself, the mother tenderly kissed her daughter. She caught diphtheria and, after a few weeks, died on Saturday 14 December 1878.

I find this story incredibly moving. It is a wonderful story of a parent's unconditional love for her child. It is also a wonderful story of sacrifice. It is a story that reflects the love and sacrifice we celebrate at Easter. However, our Easter story has a happy ending because we have a resurrection. The love and sacrifice of Good Friday leads to the beginning of all beginnings.

As Christ takes on a new life, he invites us to join him in this new life. Consider this life to be like a journey. It is a journey of discovery, of adventure. It is a journey which leads to fulfilment. We are all at different stages of this journey, some about to start, some well-travelled. But no matter where we are, every one of us needs a pit stop to refuel and refresh. Easter provides us with opportunity to do just that.

We refocus and we review. Are we on the right track? Where have we gone wrong (sin?) and do we have to make any changes before we move on? Once we have refocused, we are ready to start our journey afresh. Perhaps we were becoming a little tired in our journey but our journey is resurrected. That is what resurrection is – a new beginning.

This, of course, has major implications for 'sin,' especially in terms of new beginnings, but that is for another homily!

In the meantime, may our reflection on the Cross and Christ's sacrifice lead us to renewal and the beginning of a new stage in our journey.

Pandemic Poem

You might have come across this poem written by retired Irish American teacher, Kitty O'Meara. It expresses beautifully just what we should be doing during our lockdown and also some hope for the future. I do believe much good will come out of all of this – Kitty makes this point succinctly.

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.



To ponder

‘For practising Christians, Easter Sunday and Holy Week preceding it are the apex of our faith. Without the resurrection of Christ there is no Christianity.’ Rachel Campos-Duffy.

Time for a Smile

A parishioner was in front of me coming out of church one day, and the preacher was standing at the door as he always is to shake hands. He grabbed the parishioner by the hand and pulled him aside. The Pastor said to him, "You need to join the Army of the Lord!" The parishioner replied, "I'm already in the Army of the Lord, Pastor." Pastor questioned, "How come I don't see you except at Christmas and Easter?" He whispered back, "I'm in the secret service."

YouTube

<https://youtu.be/H59Eg7doluA>

A very happy Easter to you all.

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