

## Chaplain's Bulletin April 9, 2023



This is Easter!

“Christ’s resurrection was not a return to earthly life, as was the case with the raisings from the dead that he had performed before Easter: Jairus’ daughter, the young man of Naim, and Lazarus. These actions were miraculous events, but the persons miraculously raised returned by Jesus’ power to ordinary earthly life. At some particular moment they would die again. Christ’s resurrection is essentially different. In his risen body he passes from the state of death to another life beyond time and space. At Jesus’ resurrection his body is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit: he shares the divine life in his glorious state, so that St. Paul can say that Christ is “the man from heaven” (1 Corinthians 15:35-50). (Catechism of the Catholic Church #646).”

We humans tend to think that the best we can hope for is more of the same, but a little nicer. Many eastern religions envision an eternal cycle of reincarnation, and the best that you could hope for is being reincarnated in a higher caste, and there was always a chance that you could be reincarnated as a dung beetle. On rare occasions, television and movies would give some vision of heaven, not intending it be serious, of course, but what you’d see is pretty pathetic. In fairness, one could never do justice to heaven in a movie, not only our technology but our minds are far too feeble for such a task.

Part of having faith in God is trusting Him to keep His promises, including the promises we don’t completely understand and that He will not disappoint those who hope in Him.

In my office I have a sign that says, “Abandon all hopelessness, ye who enter here.” The greater our faith, the more we can endure the world disappointing us, because the One in whom we trust will come through. The less we trust the world to make us happy, the more we trust in God, the more we can endure the world failing us, whether in the form of other people, including people in the Church, our government, our society, our families, our health, our money, even our own wills (I continue to be a sinner, and much as the devil would like me to give up, God invites me to keep trying to be faithful). We still have to grieve loss; our faith does not make it easy but does prevent us from giving up. Jesus received the full force of the evil in the world and emerged triumphant. He can conquer the evils that threaten and attack us.

During Easter we are called to celebrate. As we fasted and did penance during Lent, so we feast during Easter. Our goal, of course, is not just partying for partying’s sake (though it is a good thing) but witnessing to the world our joy in God’s great victory over evil. We also seek to deepen our confidence in the Jesus’ victory, so we can live as victorious people. We will read a lot of Acts of the Apostles during the Easter season. We think of Acts as the sequel to the Gospel of Luke and the history of the early Church. It is also about how people act when they believe in the power of the resurrection. They were a tiny group, had few resources, and were surrounded by a very hostile culture. No one could stop them.

Alleluia!

Blessings,

Fr. Jim