

THE LORD JESUS' RESURRECTION 2025

Here we are on the greatest of all days in our year of worship, the day when Jesus Christ our Lord rose from the dead. He we are, perhaps feeling nearly as helpless as infants, perhaps hardly aware of who we really are and of what greatness we are capable, through our rebirth in the Living Lord Jesus Christ.

An infant is born into the fulness of human nature without having any notion of what human nature can be and do. Likewise, we are born into the new life of redeemed and regenerated human nature without having much awareness of what this new life is and can do. Still, the infant really is packed with potential for natural goodness and greatness (as well as potential for human sin and folly). Similarly, we who are born again unto eternal life are packed with potential for godliness and holiness. Only gradually do we learn about what to do with both our natural and our supernatural potential.

It is a wonderful thing to be baptizing young adults and older adults at this Parish this Easter Vigil. It is wonderful that the bishops, priests, and deacons, of Britain, France, and Belgium, are startled this year by the sheer number of people, most of them young, coming forward for Baptism. Still, there is something profoundly instructive about infant Baptism. When it comes to the new life of the Holy Spirit, the smartest adults are like infants. Only gradually do they begin to learn what are the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the Saints, and what is the greatness of His power in those who believe.

In Jesus Christ, we are risen to new life, but we hardly know what this means. Our lips proclaim that we have eternal life in Christ, but our minds have only started to grasp all that this profession of Faith implies. I suppose that we are all a little like someone suddenly awakened from deep sleep, partly awake, but with his thoughts in such chaos that he isn't even quite sure where he is. Gradually, however, the sleeper fully awakens.

Gradually, we come to an awareness of who we truly are. By daily listening, by daily work, and by daily prayer, we discover the full awesomeness of our identity. More than one story involves the hero discovering that he is heir to a tremendous and challenging destiny. We are such heroes, and such is our destiny, glorious beyond our current awareness. Day by day, we will realize more clearly what this destiny means, and day by day we will take up the cross that is required as we, day by day, follow where Christ leads.

Day by day, the Lord Jesus will feed us with our daily supernatural bread that gives us strength to enter into our supernatural inheritance. Day by day, acts of religion done out of duty will enlighten us. Day by day, acts of obedience will make us sure of our heavenly destiny. Daily self denial will make us strong. Daily kindness will make us loving.

As we travel with the Holy Church through the year of worship, year after year, we find that we can start seeing God, for our hearts have begun to change. "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God!" (Matthew 5:8) We hardly realize it, the fact is so stupendous and, given our weaknesses, nearly unbelievable, but we are becoming saints. From St. Peter on, all saints have been ordinary people with their share of sins, ordinary people who are letting themselves be awakened to their true identity in Jesus Christ, who has purchased them for God with His precious Blood beyond all price. Even in this life, by the Risen Lord's grace, the

moment will come when we will say with St. Paul that we know in Whom we have believed, and are confident that He will protect and reward those who belong to Him. (see 2 Timothy 1:12)

Perhaps you sense that you don't feel joyful enough on this Easter. Don't be discouraged. You do feel joy enough to be here, and I suspect that you have more joy than you feel. There is a blessing within you. If you have honestly denied yourself during Lent, if you have prayed sincerely during Lent, a divine blessing has entered within you this Easter. You may not feel it fully, but you know deep down that you are, by the work of Jesus Christ, by Baptism and Faith, by the Holy Eucharist and Good Works, a son or a daughter of God, adopted for eternal glory.

Why am I here? You know the answer, because God made you. Why do I have hope? You know the answer, because God, in Christ, has redeemed you. When did you first know these things? For myself, it is hard to say when. My experience is well described in Mark 4:26-28. A Farmer has sowed seed in me. Day and night, without my realizing it, that seed matured and grew, until suddenly - suddenly to me but not the Farmer - there was a blade. Then there was an ear . . . in God's time there will be the full corn, living and life giving unto eternal life.

Always, through His Spirit, Jesus is leading us. We think that we are standing still, but we are not. We are headed towards heaven. Our thoughts have changed from earthly to heavenly so gradually that we have barely noticed that they have changed. Our deeds have changed from selfish to loving so gradually that we hardly know it. Aware of our sins, we declare honestly that we are sinners; but the One who knows us through and through may well know - may it be so! - that we are well on the way to becoming saints. Slowly and gently, our beliefs are becoming the right beliefs, our feelings are becoming the right feelings, and our deeds are becoming the right deeds.

This is the Day the Lord has made, let us rejoice in it and be glad!

This is Easter! Like children who can hardly believe that their birthday has finally arrived, like travelers who can hardly believe that they are standing in front of the mighty pyramids or glorious St. Peter's, let us remind ourselves that the Day has come. This is the Day of Days, the Royal Day, the Day the Lord has made, the Day of Jesus Christ's Resurrection from the Dead, the Day of our Salvation. This is the Day that makes us greater and better than we realize. This is the Sabbath beyond the Sabbaths of the old law, which could reveal sin but not give Life. This the Eighth Day, beyond this world's imagining. Does "the news" seem to you like one darned thing after another? Does this world's business seem noisily repetitious, like a medical or legal advertisement on the remains of cable t.v.? On this Day of rest, mere noise is replaced by music and by silence, and by blessed calm. On this Day of rest, a still, soft voice speaks truths that shake the world but give calm joy to faithful hearts. This visible world is perishing, but already we live in the invisible world, and it belongs to us.

Day and day, Sunday by Sunday, year by year, and Easter by Easter, may the Good Lord cause us to grow in saving knowledge and holy strength. As we pass through the days, Sundays, years, and Easters, the Good Lord, in the order He sees fit, will separate us from each other for a while, but only for a little while. We will all be joyfully reunited with each other on the Great Easter, when Jesus Christ will be revealed as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and God will be all in all.