

Holy Humour 2026 “Laughter is the Best Medicine”

My spouse and I are watching a series where the protagonist, the main character, is being hunted by every other government and outlaw for having the audacity of laughing in the face of death.

Each time the character is captured, and set to be executed by this or that group, he joyfully laughs. This isn't because he thinks he's going to get saved - oh no. He thinks he is going to die. He laughs because of how much fun life is. The joy of living fills him; and death is part of that joyful experience of life. He laughs because he is living the best story of all - the story of a life lived fully, boldly, joyfully.

This happiness is contagious. It spreads - inspiring other people to live life fully and large, happy and loud - and to chase their own dreams instead of cowering from the outlaws, or the government, and the death they keep people in line with. Since death is going to find us all anyways, why hide? Live now! Shout with joy for now! Laugh! Write the awesome story of your life you always dreamed of!

This is a series, but laughing really does take the power of fear, and death, away.

Political satire, cartoons and jokes about politics, critique those with the power over life and death and let us laugh at them. Medieval court jesters were the only who could get away with teasing the king - and could say truths to the king that he didn't want to hear. It is very insecure leaders who can't handle the ridicule of jesters and fools. But the more power is used against the foolish, the more that power is exposed as honourless, weak, and failing. Take, for example, today's protests against government overreach championed by inflatable costumes. The laughter and fun inspires more and more people to stand up against corrupt governments.

When death does happen, and it does, funerals are rarely solemn affairs. People laugh. We laugh not because we're glad our loved one is dead, but because laughter takes power away from death. Laughter connects us with others who are grieving too. Laughter is an essential way people grieve. We shed tears. And we laugh. We tell stories of our loved one. We joke. We rip the power from death and we give it to our loved one. You've likely noticed how many people have celebrations of life instead of funerals. We are gathering to celebrate life, celebrate the life our loved one lived, and use joy to battle sorrow.

Today is holy humour because we join in the tears and laughter of the disciples. We cry - Jesus is dead. We laugh - death is not more powerful than life. Jesus is risen. We cry - humans fail, we betray God, we deny the Divine, we pervert justice, we kill innocents and make murder and violence a centre entertainment. We laugh - humans try again, we forgive and reconcile, we seek God, we work together to create beautiful art, cultures, cities, and cure illnesses of all kinds. We laugh at the absurdity and wonder of creation and the little part we play in the symphony of the cosmos.

Scripture invites us today to experience the first week of Jesus' resurrection. In fear of the government, and in fear of their neighbours, the disciples of Jesus hide and grieve. They are in a tomb of their own making.

But Jesus calls them back to life, out of their locked doors, and into the world - wild and dangerous and yes, full of death - but also full of wonder and delight and life. He calls them to laugh in the face of death. Laugh in the face of evil. Laugh in the face of violence. Laugh and know - God is more powerful than death, or evil, or violence. God is love and cannot be overcome. There is yet more wonders and surprises, joys and reunions yet to come.

Thomas misses out. Thomas represents us. We've missed out. Unless one of you is hiding a secret, as far as I know, none of us were around 2000 years ago. We haven't seen Jesus with our own eyes. We haven't touched him. His victory over the grave is a story - a wonderful story, but maybe not a true story.

We learn from scripture that Jesus returns - not just from the grave, and not just once, but again and again. He comes and meets people wherever they are hiding. He finds them behind their locked doors. He seeks them along the roadway where they wander. Jesus finds Thomas where Thomas is and invites him, and us, to see, to touch, to know - death is not the end of our stories. The laughter goes on. The stories go on. The love goes on.

This is our invitation. You and I – Jesus seeks us today. We are invited to ponder what would make us believe in Jesus, and life after death. We're invited to pray that to God. Invite God to surprise us. Scripture tells us we are blessed when we believe without having seen... but it doesn't say we're unfortunate when we ask for proof. Thomas isn't belittled. He is brought to belief and joy.

I believe, wholly and deeply, there is more to reality than life. More to the cosmos than science can explain. More to faith than our Bible holds. More to God than any one person can comprehend. This fills me with joy. It fills me with laughter. Yes, I fear. Yes, I fret. Yes, I will know hardships. Yes, I will die. But oh that's just another chapter in the story of who I am. My story goes on - after death. Jesus is the example and promise that death, violence, hate, injustice and greed and all sins are not as powerful as they'd like to be seen. Oh no - it is God who has the last laugh. It is life, peace, love, justice and generosity that cannot be defeated - only set back. The author of this story has guaranteed Goodness wins.

It may be scary for a bit. It will be sad. Death is real and an essential part of living. All who live will die.

But oh, what wonder, what joy! The Author of All, Creator God, Love Divine has written the cosmos to be one of renewal, new life, new birth, and never ending joy.

So laugh! Laugh at the absurdity of the world. Laugh! Laugh at the seasons and weather. Laugh! Laugh at ourselves bumbling about. Laugh - not because any of these are fake, but because we are so filled with the joy of our God, the humour of the universe, and the happiness to be experiencing reality. Laugh because laughter is the best medicine to fight off despair, fear, hate, and violence. Laugh and throw open the doors to life - we're gonna get hurt - but we're gonna have the best story of all - the one of radical God-like joy and love -- the story where death is just a plot point, and never the end. Amen.