

Sermon

- ◆ **First Reading:** *Acts 10:34a, 37-43*
- ◆ **Second Reading:** *Colossians 3:1-4*
- ◆ **Gospel:** *John 20:1-9*

In the mass of Easter Sunday (“Mass during the day”), after the first reading, psalm 17 is proclaimed, and the response to the psalm is “THIS DAY WAS MADE BY THE LORD, WE REJOICE AND ARE GLAD”, sounds nice!!, what is there to be glad about during these weeks of this world wide Pandemic??, we’re on lockdown since 23rd March ; world news has been and still is dominated by the drastic consequences of the Covid-19 ; personally, as a priest in full time parish ministry, holy week has been dismal, and that’s putting it mildly!!, imagine “celebrating” holy week with all our churches closed, no parishioners in sight, no mass, no confessions, no washing of the feet, no veneration of the cross, and no Easter Vigil ; by the way, we priests during the lockdown continue to celebrate masses privately, this is a directive given to us from diocesan authorities, but I can assure you, it’s not the same. Then comes a big question WHERE IS THE LORD OF LIFE in all that we are going thru’ presently??, a perfectly valid question, with a perfectly valid WHAT??, no! there is no perfectly valid answer, how could there be?? ; then there’s another type of question that was asked “Is this pandemic a wake-up call for all of us??”.....whether it is or whether it isn’t, we’re all in it together ;

Where is our Faith in the midst of all this??, use your imagination, after the death of Jesus and while He was in the tomb, surely there was confusion, fear and uncertainty among His disciples, they must have said to themselves “well! what do we do now??, He’s gone!, our Lord and Master has been taken from us!!, where to now??, better hide somewhere or they’ll be after us as well...” ; then on the 3rd day, the Great Event happened, the lord and Master rose from the dead, and came among them, they were overcome with joy. So really if you think about it, the Lord had not gone from those He loved and cared about, He was temporarily absent, the best was yet to come ; In His resurrected state He said to the women **DO NOT BE AFRAID ; GO AND TELL MY BROTHERS THAT THEY MUST LEAVE FOR GALILEE; THEY WILL SEE ME THERE....**

When they met the Resurrected Lord they were joyful and full of hope ;It was as though “life-had-returned”, then He said something wonderful to them **KNOW THAT I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, YES! TO THE END OF TIME** and He never said “and know that for as long as I’m with you, you’ll be having a great time, with no worries and nothing to upset you”!!!!,

certainly that’s not what our Faith is about, quite the contrary, it’s about continuing to follow the Lord-of-life even at times when there seems to be an “absence”, our Faith is about taking to heart His brutally honest words when He once said to them **“IN THE WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TROUBLE, BUT BE BRAVE, FOR I HAVE CONQUERED THE WORLD”** (gospel of st.John 16 ; 33)....

These are great words of Hope in the midst of the pandemic ; as believers in the Risen Lord we are expected to continue praying, hoping, and serving in whatever way we can to alleviate the burden of those who are now broken hearted and are losing loved ones, losing their jobs, their income, everything!!

As believers Let us be grateful with our Gift of Faith in the Risen Lord and Saviour, there is Hope for better days to come, let us be glad and rejoice that so many people from all walks of life are reaching out to our more vulnerable, housebound and lesser well off citizens..

KEEP THE FAITH, BE KIND and HOPEFUL, THIS TOO WILL PASS..

A peaceful Easter to all of you, from frs. Nico and Kieran..

Fr Kieran A. Fitzharris SVD