

Easter Sunday  
April 21, 2019  
“Resurrection Faith and Hope”

Acts 10:34...43  
1 Cor 5:6-8  
Jn 20:1-9

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

We, certainly, live in difficult times. Perhaps, never in human history have so many been exposed to and harmed by the darkness in the human heart. Acts of terrorism seem to be the new normal – Our own nation is terribly divided and polarized – Environmental change, whether natural or caused, is the subject of fierce debate – And even our Church has been wounded by the very men who were deputed to lead us to God!

Consequently, it's no surprise that people are discouraged – that they lose hope – and that nearly 50,000 Americans took their own lives last year!

However, this is only one aspect of the picture. We also live in a time of marvelous possibilities. We live in a time of spiritual hope, promise, and assurance. Because we live in the time after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ! Moreover, we also have the Tradition of our 2000 years of direction and guidance by the Holy Spirit!

The Resurrection of Jesus truly changed the course of history. Before the time of Jesus, most people lived with only this life in view. Consequently, with few exceptions, most people lived in and for the moment. Those with wealth used every means to satisfy themselves. Those with power extended that power, and used it to exploit others for their own personal gain. Thus, most people suffered and struggled just to stay alive!

However, then something changed. And that change began when Jesus rose from the dead – For with the Resurrection of Jesus, Christianity was born.

Unfortunately, the Resurrection seems meaningless without faith. And faith is a relationship with God that goes beyond belief to the known – It enables us to see beyond material realities!

Consequently, Christians had hope where others despaired – love, instead of hatred – mercy, instead of vindictive punishment – and peace, instead of war! Moreover, they knew something more in their heart of hearts – They knew that the best or worst life here would end with the beginning of a new life that was beyond human imagination or comprehension!

Believers know that Jesus came once, long ago, to lift us out of the chaos and destructive evil of our fallen world. He did not remove the chaos – nor did he destroy evil. He came to teach us how to survive both of those terrible forces. He came to tell us of the real purpose of our life here – which was to journey in faith and trust in an unseen God who made us for eternal bliss and joy!

Jesus came to reveal his Father’s infinite love and mercy – He came to call the worst of us to something better – to something beyond which we could only hope. Jesus came to show us the way out of our weakness and sinfulness by bringing us the favor of God which is the power of grace.

Moreover, the wonderful thing about the risen Jesus is that he continues to be with us in so many ways. He is with us until the end of time, wherever 2 or 3 are gathered in his name. He is there in word and sacrament – in the Gospel, in the Bread and Wine – as well as in the hearts of all true disciples throughout the world!

Brothers and Sisters, Easter is always a cause for celebration. People dress up – Children search for eggs – Chocolate is always a welcomed gift. But these things convey a deeper reality. For the colored eggs are a symbol of new life – The sweets, a foretaste of the joy and bliss that is promised us – And our best clothes are a reminder of the robes of glory that we will wear in the Kingdom of Heaven!

So, let us pray, today, that we always keep the true meaning of Easter before us. May we draw closer each moment to the risen Jesus, alive and present to us. And may our faith and hope prevail despite the chaos, the hatred, and the political unrest of our world today!

Amen.

April 21, 2019

Msgr. Russell G. Terra