

**Homily for Easter Sunday Year C 17-04-2022 by Fr. Lubem Waya, osj.**

**First Reading: Acts 10:34.37-43**

**Psalm: Psalm 118**

**Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4**

**Gospel: John 20:1-9**

**CHRIST IS RISEN: DO YOU BELIEVE?**

Today we have come to the heart of the Christian message, the Resurrection of Christ. We are all gathered to profess and witness to this great truth without which Christianity would not stand. This truth is what Peter affirms in our first reading as a direct eyewitness of the events in the life of Jesus leading to His death and now His resurrection. Human frailty may doubt it, science may attempt to disprove it, and secularism may deny its veracity to dumb down this truth because it remains unprecedented. Nevertheless, by faith, we know that it is true. And what is true remains true, whether or not we accept it. In Christianity, this event qualifies Christ as the Firstborn from the dead. He dashed the hopes of His people who were waiting for a political Messiah to liberate them from political domination, but He came to liberate not just them but the entire human race including you and me from what is more devastating, that is, the slavery of sin.

To accomplish this, He emptied Himself taking on flesh to become one with us in everything but sin. By choosing to share our human condition, He sanctified our state so that poor though we are as weak humans, we may become also children of God, made partakers of everlasting life. He paid the price with His life on the Cross of Calvary but God did not abandon Him in hades as today He rises from the dead. By dying, He destroyed our death, and by rising He restored our life. We now await His coming again in glory when He shall bring all things to completion according to the plan of the Father as judge of the living and the dead. Today, therefore, is a new dawn, and we join the psalmist to say that this day is made by the Lord let us rejoice and be glad in it.

We rejoice and are glad for the goodness of the Lord who has shown us so much love by not abandoning us to our fate. Out of love, even after His resurrection, He still leaves us proofs to aid us in embracing this unusual truth. The first is the heavy stone on the entrance of the tomb being rolled away, and the second is the empty tomb itself. Mary of Magdala was the first to notice this which made her profess that Christ was no longer in the tomb. She became the first witness to the resurrection. Then she became the apostle to the apostles as she announced this to the disciples. And Simon Peter became the second witness of the resurrection when he arrived and first went into the tomb in the company of the beloved disciple, only to discover that the tomb was empty. These two discoveries are proofs stressing two factors: first, the power of the Risen Christ shown in the stone that is rolled away with no one including the soldiers knowing when or how. The second is the fact that the tomb was empty, which would mean that any appearance of Christ is a real, living, bodily Christ who is not a ghost. Compelled by the truth of these facts, the disciples begin to make meaning gradually of what scripture meant that He must rise from the dead.

The witnessing began by Mary of Magdala, Peter and Paul, is then taken up by the rest of the disciples including you and me today. Peter ministers to the household of Cornelius the Roman centurion. Paul ministers to the Colossians, also about the same truth of the Resurrection, charging them to focus on things of heaven rather than things of the earth. Like them, we too who are privileged partakers of this good news are today invited to share it with those around us by word and deed. How well are we bearing this witness in our lives, homes, schools, offices, ministries, businesses, places of work, etc? It is very easy to see the faults of others, to accuse and condemn them, but not to see our omissions or commissions. Many hearts have grown cold today because Christ's disciples including you and me, have not lived up to expectations. We are all complicit in dumbing down the faith. Today we are all called each to do his or her bit in the mission. It begins with you. May God forgive us and renew us to become true instruments and witnesses to His Resurrection to the ends of the earth. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.