

Homily of Easter Sunday Year A 2020

Easter date is not set as that of Christmas. The Catholic Church has determined the date of Easter since 325 AD. In that year, the Council of Nicaea established that Easter be held on the first Sunday after the first full moon (when night and day are of equal length). This is worked out by ecclesial geographers.

Easter is the greatest Christian celebration. It is celebrated for 50 days, from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. The 50 days' period is called Eastertide. St. Paul tells us that Christianity is what it is because of the event of the Resurrection. He writes in 1 Corinthians 15:14, "And if Christ has not been raised, then empty too is our preaching, empty too your faith."

At his crucifixion and death, the mission of Jesus appeared to have ended up in a failure. Then, suddenly, as we read in the Gospel, "On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb." An angel of the Lord removed the stone that sealed Jesus' tomb (Matthew 28:2). Jesus was freed from the darkness of the tomb. Jesus' mission came alive again. From a few followers in Israel, Christianity became a world religion which has influenced every aspect of the world history.

St. Paul tells us in the second reading, "Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough, inasmuch as you are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Therefore, Easter means rising from the old life of malice and wickedness to new life of sincerity and truth.

Our generation and the generations to come will remember the year 2020 when Coronavirus shut down the world and we could not gather in the sanctuary to celebrate Easter. We continue to pray for God's divine intervention and deliverance. Whatever the cause and source of the virus, we pray and invoke the power of the Resurrection, that power that raised Jesus from the tomb, to save and deliver us from the wrath of the virus. May the angel that rolled away the stone that sealed Jesus' tomb roll away the deadly virus. We pray again as we prayed two Sundays ago from Romans 8:11, may the Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwell in us and give us our life back again. Amen.

Happy and Spirit-filled Easter to you all!

Fr. Martin Eke, MSP