

Easter Sunday, 4 April 2021

Scriptures: Acts 10:34,37-43; Col.3:1-4; John 20:1-9

Homily: Fr. Ken

Easter is our great Christian celebration. We could be tempted to think that Christmas is the greatest because it captures our imagination, and it appears so much easier to relate to a vulnerable little child than to enter into, let alone understand, the mystery of a God who, having died a horrendous death as a public criminal, should then be raised again to life.

But we should not be dismayed. The apostles themselves struggled to understand what was happening.

The gospels describe the drama in the early morning of Easter Sunday. Mary of Magdala, and the other women, discover and report that the tomb is empty. John and Peter run to check for themselves. In John's Gospel, it is worth remembering that he wrote with the benefit of having been able to piece the story together after a lifetime of meditating on it. Seeing the empty tomb was the moment he began to see the connections and the fulfillment of what had been foretold in the scriptures. John tells us that at this moment the apostles had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that Jesus must rise from the dead.

John is also not afraid to reveal what happened in the evening of Easter Sunday when Jesus came to the apostles who were hiding behind locked doors.

In the Acts of the Apostles, over and over again the disciples return to the key elements of our religious faith. We see them in Peter's address to Cornelius and his family: Jesus is the awaited Messiah; he was crucified for us; he was raised from the dead.

At the celebration of Easter, it is enough for us to realize that we are being asked to accept our call to be faithful witnesses of the Resurrection. As heralds of this good news—news which even makes the Friday of the Week “Good”—we are proclaiming not only that Christ was brought back to life, but that we too have been brought back to life with him.

There is a temptation to think that we must wait until our earthly life comes to an end before we will experience this new life. But it is clear from the scriptural writings of St. Paul that this is not so.

We have already been brought back to life and freed from sin that held us captive. St. Paul is clear that we set our sights on the religious worldview, and realize that Christ is now our life. That is the meaning of Happy Easter.