

The God given miracle

Let us hope that by the time you read this that the war in the Middle East is coming to an end or at least there is some kind of resolution acceptable to all sides. None of us, of whatever faith or none, can believe that nations today want to settle their differences by going to war, instead of by diplomacy and compromise.

It is particularly depressing that this war has occurred in the season of Lent and may continue over Easter. Times in the church year when we are asked to repent of our sins and plead for forgiveness from God, so that we can make a new start to our lives and be renewed and enlivened by the glory of the resurrection of Christ on Easter Day.

The main message of Easter is that Christ, by his resurrection, has vindicated all that he stood for in his earthly ministry. If God had not raised Christ from the dead, then that would have meant that the forces of evil would have won, the demonic powers would have had their way. There would therefore be no hope and belief in the ultimate victory of good over evil, in the virtues of sacrificial love, compassion, reconciliation, forgiveness, and care and concern for the weak and vulnerable and the afflicted. There would be no moral incentive for human beings to strive to live their lives by the highest ideals of absolute goodness, according to Christ's teaching. Humanity would have

remained enslaved to false gods, to its own selfish and amoral desires and temptations. Sadly, the world today still has areas where the demonic forces of evil, pride and power strive to dominate, and where the battle against them can involve great suffering and self-sacrifice, akin to Christ's struggle against those destructive powers in his own day. Nevertheless, the Resurrection is a sign from God that working for the Good is never in vain, it is always a positive endeavour.

Christians are sometimes called "Easter people" because of their belief in the Resurrection, and its importance for their lives. It is not seen as a one-off historical event but as a sign from God that whatever should befall us, the Good News that Christ overcame evil and the powers of darkness should give us hope and courage in our lives. How can we remain "Easter people" in our daily lives? What can help us?

Obviously by prayer and worship; by repentance of the sins we commit; by not harbouring resentment against anyone, by seeking reconciliation no matter the cost; by acts of kindness; by being courteous to all whom we may meet in our daily lives; by giving others a smile or at least a greeting, for we are all children of God.

And last but not least, using humour. In other words not be too gloomy in the exercise of our faith. A grim and miserable Christian is a contradiction in terms. Laughter has a redeeming and cathartic function in our lives and is a sign of "True Resurrection".

And last but not least, rejoicing at the explosion of new life as Spring comes after the deadness of winter. There is much to be thankful for. So let us rejoice at the God given miracle of the Resurrection and look to the future in the hope and positive expectation that by God's grace the Good will always overcome evil.

A Happy and Blessed Easter to you all!

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