

Easter Sunday (Cycle C) Homily
Saint William, Champion | April 17, 2022
Acts 10:34a, 37-43 | Col 3:1-4 | Lk 24:1-12

Deacon Robert Mintus

Sister Margaret Mary is teaching her Sunday school class. And she asks them a question: What is the story of Easter all about? Two hands go up. Sister calls on Billy. He proudly stands up and says, “Easter is all about getting baby chicks and hunting for beautifully decorated eggs.” Sister politely says, “Well, we often do that, but I’m looking for something more...” She calls on Susy, who proudly stands up and says, “Easter is all about the Easter bunny, and hiding baskets full of candy.” Sister responds, “Well, that’s somewhat true, but it’s still not what I’m looking for. Can anybody else answer the question?” After a long wait, finally another hand goes up, and Sister calls on Johnny. He proudly stands up and says, “Easter is all about when Jesus died on Good Friday and was buried and then the grave opened and Jesus came out.” And as Sister breathes a sigh of relief, Johnny continues... “And if he sees his shadow...”

Today, as Christians, we celebrate something that is at the core of our beliefs... Jesus Christ, who suffered in the most excruciating way possible, by being beaten nearly to death and dying on the cross on Good Friday for our sins, was raised from the dead on Sunday. And through His resurrection, He burst through the power of sin and death from the inside, so that its power over us was destroyed, once and for all.

That's a pretty powerful statement to make in a world that lives for today. One that says, YOLO - you only live once, so grab all the good things while you can. As Christians, today is the lynchpin of our faith. Without Easter, Jesus was a just really good guy who performed miracles and healed people, fed people, and taught us about God. Today, we are reminded in the most certain terms that because of Jesus, life means something more. Death does not hold power over us any more.

Today, we celebrate with symbols of chicks and bunnies because they remind us of the newness of life. I went out shopping this past Friday, and those were the only things I could find at Daffin's. But like Sister Margaret Mary – I was looking for more... because for Christians, those

aren't the most important symbols of Easter, rather, they are the cross and the empty tomb, with the stone rolled away and the wrappings set aside. Today, we look to Jesus as the source of new and unending life – not only for us, but for each and every person we've known and loved who has closed their eyes in death. It means that their leaving us is only a temporary separation, and that we will see them when our lives come to their ends.

Doesn't that make our lives different... Knowing that our lives on earth, while they are imperfect, are a part of something much greater? Knowing that our struggles and setbacks here are meant to lead to something more... knowing, that, ultimately, God's power will prevail?

So today, Easter calls us to take a step back and consider not only where we've been in our lives, but also, and perhaps more importantly, where we are going.

That good news strengthened Peter and the other disciples, and led them to spend the rest of their lives not cowering in fear that they might be

found, but courageously sharing the wonderful news about God's gift of salvation that was restored to us in Christ.

So today, I challenge you to remember that we are an Easter people. Each of us, without exception, with all our quirks and imperfections, is a part of the Church of God, founded by the death and resurrection of Christ. By our baptism, we are washed clean of all our sins and called to share in His eternal life. That's the freshest of hopes and the best news that we can offer to all our loved ones and every stranger we meet... not that Spring is around the corner... but that eternal life is just around the corner. So we celebrate with the words of a traditional Easter greeting – and your response is “He is risen indeed”... So are you ready to respond? I'm going to give you one chance here, so let's get this right the first time...

Christ is risen! (assembly responds, “He is risen indeed”)

Today, let those words resound in you as you remember, celebrate, and believe. Should you encounter someone without that Easter joy, share it with them. Be that Easter people whom Jesus called you to be.