

**Pamintuan, Fr. Edison**

**April 04, 2021**

**Easter Sunday/The Resurrection of the Lord**

**The Mass of Easter Day**

**Acts 10:34a, 37-43**

**Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23**

**Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8**

**Jn 20:1-9**

**REJOICE WITH JESUS!**

**Have you seen a picture of Jesus smiling or laughing?**

We are used to seeing an image or picture of Jesus as serious looking as if he did not know how to smile or laugh. Let us not forget that he became one like us in all things except sin. In his humanity, he experienced sufferings. He even cried when he heard that his friend, Lazarus, died. (Jn 11:35) If he knew how to cry, I am sure he knew how to smile and laugh with people.

One of the instances that I am certain Jesus laughed his heart out was when he rose from the dead after three (3) days. **Why was he laughing?** He was laughing simply because God pulled a joke on Satan when he resurrected from the dead. Satan thought he had won on Friday, but God had the last laugh – he laughed his heart out on Easter Sunday.

There was an ancient Russian Orthodox tradition wherein the day before Easter people would gather to tell jokes. Priests would join them in telling their best clean jokes to one another. The reason for doing this was to reflect the joke God pulled on Satan in the Resurrection. Satan believed he had triumphed on Friday when in fact he was defeated when Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday.

Our responsorial psalm says: **“This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.”** Indeed, we have reasons to rejoice this Easter. **Why?** It is because this Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus conveys to us a joyful message that death is not our final destination but fullness of life with him. We must rejoice because his rising from the dead communicates to us that the tomb can no longer hold us down. We have to rejoice because the tomb of despair, the tomb of discouragement, the tomb of hopelessness, the tomb of doubt, the tomb of death itself were conquered/defeated by our Risen Christ. We must rejoice because the Risen Christ reiterates to us that with Him we are victors, not victims.

The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus gives us reasons to rejoice. At the same time, it challenges us to be joyful sharers of his Good News to others. Our joy of the resurrection must not be confined to self. It must be shared. And this is what we have heard in the **Acts of the**

**Apostles.** The apostles, headed by Peter, were so joyful of the resurrection that they went out even though there were threats of persecution. The joy they had overturned their fears. They became fearless witnesses. Literally, they were no longer **walking in fear but living in faith.** In our 2<sup>nd</sup> reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians we are being dared to change our course. Listen again to what St. Paul said, **“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.”** As joyful believers of the Risen Christ, St. Paul is reiterating to us that ‘newness of life in Christ’ must be our direction. He is reminding us not go back to our old sinful ways. Rather, he is calling us to live our lives in purity and integrity of heart.

**Do you want to live your Catholic Christian life joyfully?** Let me share with you the **Six Ways to Live a Joyful Life** according to **St. John Bosco.**

1. **Live for God alone.** – “Give God the greatest possible glory and honor Him with your whole soul. If you have a sin on your conscience, remove it as soon as possible by means of a good Confession.”
2. **Be a servant.** – “Never offend anyone. Above all, be willing to serve others. Be more demanding of yourself than of others.”
3. **Be careful in your associations.** – “Do not trust those who have no faith in God and who do not obey His precepts. Those who have no scruples in offending God and who do not give Him what they should, will have many fewer scruples in offending you and even betraying you when it is convenient for them.”
4. **Spend carefully.** – “If you do not wish to be ruined, never spend more than you earn. You should bear this in mind and always measure your true possibilities accurately.”
5. **Be humble.** – “Be humble. Speak little of yourself and never praise yourself before anyone. He who praises himself, even if he has real merit, risks losing the good opinion of others. He who seeks only praise and honors is sure to have an empty head fed only by wind... will have no peace of soul and will be unreliable in his undertakings.”
6. **Carry your cross.** – “Carry your cross on your back and take it as it comes, small or large, whether from friends or enemies and of whatever wood it be made. The most intelligent and happiest of men is he who, knowing that he is doomed to carry the cross throughout life, willingly and resignedly accepts the one God sends him.”

The suggestions of St. John Bosco in living a joyful life is not complicated. Our children can even live these simple rules. Think about it – these suggestions are deeply rooted in the Risen Christ and it is counter-cultural. The standard of the Risen Christ about living a joyful life is totally different from the world’s standard.

As we continue our joyful celebration, let us ask the Risen Christ to remind us always that we are not people of despair but people of hope. Therefore, let us rejoice for our lives will not end in **Good Friday** but in **Easter Sunday.**

**Happy Easter to you and your whole family!**