

St. Leo The Great
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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He is Risen! Alleluia, Alleluia

L I F E



The attempt to try to define life is inexhaustible and perhaps an impossible thing to do. There are a plethora of ‘sayings’ about what life is and what it isn’t – some are true but many are trite and empty in real substance and meaning. Many will tell you that life is to be lived to the max, and in one sense it is if we are to see life as the every day opportunity to use our time well and not live passively. However, in reality our day-to-day living within our families, doing our jobs, running around on endless errands, driving kids to the four corners of the earth and back in the same day and then finally sleep.... life is not so much that thing that we squeeze every drop out of but that which can sometimes feel like it’s squeezing the last drop out of us.

Actually, don’t we consider people who look like they are “living life to the max”, hyper, antsy and nervous? Some may lead a frantic existence but it could be a sign they are afraid of being still, calm, silent and at peace.

“Are there ways of gauging one’s spiritual strength?”

“Many.”

“Give us one.”

“Find out how often you become disturbed in the course of a day.”

Fr. Anthony DeMello, SJ

Sometimes we are tempted to look on the lives of others as if we needed to put into ours and get into ours what those others have.

“Don’t compare your life to others. You have no idea what they’ve been through.”

Sam Cawthorn

The Gospel two Sunday’s ago (5th Sunday of Lent, C) told us that, like the woman caught in adultery, the encounter with Jesus Christ in the present frees us from our past (and that’s where we should leave it – in the past) where it has

no power over us. Our future is in Christ Jesus, Risen and victorious over death. Yet so many fear death and live an uneasy life seeking to avoid it at all costs. Could it be that we are now confronting so rapidly this idea of Euthanasia and Doctor-Assisted Suicide in our country because we fear that death has control over us and so we want to have control over death? Perhaps.

“Fear not that your life should come to an end, but rather that it shall never have a beginning.”

John Henry Newman

Life in its essence, its beauty and its wonder is so profoundly seen in the birth of all things but most especially in the development and birth of a human. Like never before, we are an age that has seen with our own eyes the wonder of the child being knitted together within the womb of a woman, yet, like never before we have sought to kill it and say it isn’t human and it isn’t life at all. We are so smart and so foolish all at once. We have embraced progress and technology but when they show us how intricate and wondrous is the gift of life in the womb, we look away, we change the subject. The modern world seems strangely preoccupied with control over those things we fear.

“Life is a flame that is always burning itself out, but it catches fire again every time a child is born.”

George Bernard Shaw

Life itself had a beginning in the One who always was – in the One who is the beginning and end of all things: God. It was God’s plan and design that brought our world and us into existence, evidenced in the great intelligence in which all things are a part. We see in everything that has been created great complexity and mystery and while the world is disordered because of sin, there exists a great harmony and balance which can so easily be lost because of human interference. Yet God continues to renew all things and especially us when we will but come to Him with our lives, as children come to parents with broken toys. Life under God has meaning; life without God has no meaning.

“The tragedy of life is what dies inside a man while he lives.”

Albert Schweitzer

Life under God could seem to be remote, removed from our experience and ignored were it not for God to send His Son, who lived eternally outside of time, into the world in time. The time was just some 2 millennia ago when the Creator of all things would humbly be born among His creatures in the appearance of a helpless baby boy, born of a woman who was a virgin, and a foster father – considered two nobodies of this world, yet parents to God.

And why did He come to the earth? Because He loved what He had made and wanted to save it from the darkness that had come upon it and He is Love itself. God was about

to create the world again in a spiritual sense and reality. His Son, Jesus, would not only teach us and show us how all time and history pointed to Him, but He would show us the unfathomable lengths that He would go to in order to take our place. We had deserved death for our sins – but He chose to bring us life, in this world and eternally, by dying in our place. In doing this, Jesus revealed to us the very heart of God – a heart beating and burning with love for man and all of humanity.

“People will never take evil seriously
nor even see much need
to tap the resources of God
until they join in with the costly
redemptive purposes of love.”

J. B. Phillips



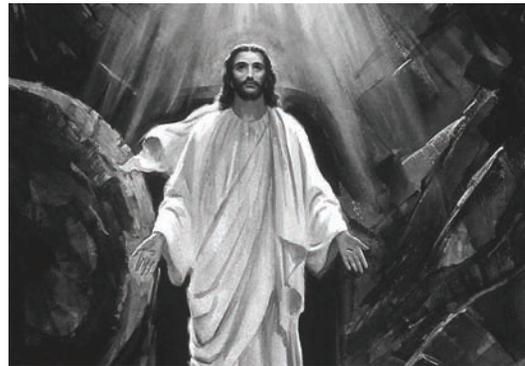
How is it that we speak of love and mercy when we hold up as dear to us Catholics the very symbol of great torture and a despicable way for a human to die? How is it that we see a symbol of defeat and hate as a sign of victory and love? Venerable Fulton J. Sheen said, (and here I'm paraphrasing), that the Cross is the great symbol of contradiction. The vertical bar represents the will of God for our lives and the horizontal bar our will. When you place the will of God up against the will of man you get a cross and a contradiction. But when you put someone on it – Jesus Christ – then He reconciles the two together.

This past Lent, and all of the Lents of our life, have been the preparation and the annual rehearsal for our time to be spent forever with God, stripping away all that is not of Christ and His teaching and example, and taking on all that He is and wants to give. Our troubles and our struggles, our pain and our sufferings were united to Christ when He, Who was without sin, took our place and went to death, putting to death the control evil could have on us and heap on us. His death, therefore, would in such a strange and unique way make us free. That the most precious life of all – the life of the God man – could so horrifically be snuffed out by those He came to save, leaves us speechless and rightly puzzled. How could a death, particularly the death of One who didn't appear by human standards to deserve it, change a single thing about this world save to say that His life was a waste and that it was a shame that they killed an innocent man?

Yet He was fulfilling the will of His Father and as He had said to Pilate,

“For this I was born
and for this I came into the world
to testify to the truth.”

John 18:37



To say that Jesus “Is Risen” is often expressed and understood as if someone were referring to a sleeping man who has now awakened, saying, “He’s up.” But that would suggest that the sleeping man’s rising was expected as is the rising of every sleeping person in the world – we go to sleep and we awaken again. However, looking closely at the death of Jesus it is plain to see that those closest to Him, His friends and apostles, didn't expect Him to rise from death at all. The women who went to the tomb on Easter morning (Easter only to us now) didn't expect to greet a living body but to anoint a dead one. The apostles themselves planned to return to their former lives or to flee from the very way of life they had been living with Jesus, evidenced in Peter returning to fishing and Cleopas and his road companion on the road to Emmaus, leaving the sad and bitter memories of Jesus' death behind them. The disciples who walked with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, but didn't know that it was Jesus, uttered to Him their crushing disappointment in the words, “... but we had hoped...” Now their hope was gone and they were walking away from all they had come to know and experience in the last three years of their lives since He had called them.

He rose from the dead as the Old Testament had foretold and promised. In Him the Creator made a new and a final covenant with His creation; a new way of relating to and living with God for, through Jesus, God is *our* Father and Jesus is *our* Saviour.

Through sin we deserved to die but Christ took our place. We owe to Him our very lives that we are to live in the imitation of His great love. This is the heart of Mercy itself which enables us to, beyond words and full comprehension, live forever with Him! How truly blessed we are! (*Fr. Charles*)

Mass Intentions – Easter Week March 29-April 3

Tuesday & Wednesday – No Masses, No Holy Hour

Thursday 31 March – 8:30 am - Ints. of Teresa Fox req.
St. Leo's CWL

Friday April 1 – 8:30 am - Corinna McQuat+ req. St. Leo's CWL

Saturday April 2 - 5 pm - John & Mary Fox+ req. C. Duncan

Sunday April 3-9 am - Deceased Members of Mifsud Family
req. J Boland



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