

Easter Sunday April 17, 2022

Many times throughout history we have discovered that the world is much bigger than we previously thought.

One such moment was when Christopher Columbus landed in the Americas. Up to that point, Europeans did not know that there were so many lands and peoples beyond the Atlantic Ocean. A whole new world was opened up for them. They came to see that God was at work beyond the borders of the known world. These discoveries inspired people to further explore the vast world that God had created. Europeans discovered that the world was much bigger than they thought and it opened up new possibilities for the world.

Another such moment was when the telescope was invented. Now scientists could see the planets and stars up close. We discovered that they were more than just lights in the sky but that they were huge objects traveling in space. Searching out the skies, we discovered that the universe was immensely more vast than anyone had dreamed of. It inspired us to wonder whether there was life on other planets and to dream of one day being able to travel and maybe even live on those distant stars. Those discoveries opened up a new world of possibilities for human beings.

Over the past one hundred years, another great moment of human history unfolded with the development of technology. What seemed impossible before - flying in airplanes, speaking to people on the other side of the planet, watching movies in our living rooms - all became possible. All these advances have made it possible to live longer, healthier, and more comfortable lives. We continue to dream of newer and more exciting ways to develop technology to solve more problems. As science advances, even more things we never dreamed possible before are becoming more available

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to us.

All these great advances in human history stretched us beyond the boundaries of our understanding. They opened up new possibilities for us. They made us dare to dream.

Today we gather to celebrate the most magnificent event in human history. It is an event that meant more for humanity than the discovery of the Americas, the exploration of space, or the development of technology. That event is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Unlike any other moment in human history, the Resurrection of Jesus opened up a new world of possibilities for us. It made us aware of our eternal destiny - to live forever in friendship with God. It made us dare to dream of a life filled with the presence of God.

Today's gospel tells us that Mary Magdalene went out to the tomb "early in the morning, while it was still dark". That darkness is symbolic of how the world was before the Resurrection of Jesus. It was a world plunged in darkness, unaware of God's love and His plan for humanity. Up to that time, many people believed that there was life after death. But, they did not consider it a pleasant experience. Rather, the afterlife was a place of darkness and gloom. The Jews called the place of the dead "Sheol" and described it as "the pit". Pagans called the afterlife "Hades". It was nothing to look forward to. To them, our life on earth was as good as it was going to get.

But all that changed with the Resurrection of Jesus. By raising Jesus from the dead, God revealed our eternal destiny to us. We would also one day be raised from the dead - not just our souls but our bodies - and live

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forever in Heaven. This Heaven is not a place of gloom and sorrow but a place of joy. It is where we achieve our heart's desire for union with our God. It is where justice will finally prevail and every tear will be wiped away. Through the Resurrection of Jesus a whole new world of possibilities opened up for us. We have a new hope that one day we will join him in a life where death and suffering can no longer touch us.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ did not just reveal to us the possibility of life after death. It also revealed to us a whole new horizon for our life on earth. On the cross, Jesus conquered the great enemies of humanity - sin and death. Because of that, we believe in faith that there is no enemy that cannot be conquered in Jesus Christ. We are not just sitting around waiting for Jesus to come back and make everything right. Not at all. Instead we are struggling against injustice in all its forms because Jesus has won the victory of justice. We work for peace because Jesus overcame every form of division on the cross. All things are possible for those who have faith. It is precisely the Resurrection of Jesus which has inspired us to dream of a world that is marked by justice and peace.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ changed everything. But, there are still people who live in darkness. They are unaware of the hope that is offered them through faith in Jesus Christ. They are still living as if this life is all there is. They are still living in fear because they do not know that Jesus Christ is already victorious. It is up to us to point them to the truth. We can do that with confidence because the joy we have in Jesus is so much greater than whatever pleasures the world has to offer. The hope that we have in Jesus Christ is the answer to the lack of meaning that so many people live with today. Faith in Jesus, risen from the dead, is the answer to all the anguish of the human heart.

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The tomb is empty. That is what Mary Magdalene discovered that first Easter morning. St Peter and St John saw it for themselves. The reason that the tomb is empty is that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. All of us will still one day experience death. But, like Jesus, our tombs will one day be empty because He has promised to raise us up from death - body and soul - to live with Him forever. It is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ that opens up this possibility for us. It makes our lives on this earth so much bigger. It gives us the inspiration to dream of and work toward a world filled with God's love and justice.