

What is the most important event, the greatest victory ever won, in the history of the world?

It is the victory that has set us free from sin and the bondage of death!

It is the victory that has vanquished all the forces of evil in the world!

It is the victory that has established the reign of justice, love and peace in the world,
for all who believe and accept it, a reign to be consummated at the end of the world!

It is the victory that has brought us new life in the Spirit leading to eternal life!

It is the victory that has made us sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters in Christ!

It is the victory that makes us all one together in God, a union to be perfected in heaven!

It is the victory of the Crucifixion and Death of Jesus for our own Resurrection!

And so the Church sings:

“Jesus, through your Cross and Resurrection, you have brought joy to the world!

Saving Lord, you are joy for all ages!

We glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, who saves us and sets us free!

Through him we find salvation, life and resurrection!”

1. Sacramental Presence of Christ’s Death

Today we are able to be spiritually present at the saving, victorious Death of Christ,
through the Liturgy of the Church.

Today’s Liturgy makes us able to be sacramentally present at this most momentous event
in the history of the world, an event that will endure for all time.

In today’s Liturgy, Christ is present with us in the saving power of his Death!

2. The Meaning of Salvation

Christ died for the salvation of the world. What does this mean?

It means that Christ by his Death and Resurrection has vanquished sin and death and begun a
new creation, opening the way to live eternally with God and all the blessed.

We are created anew by our Baptism which has come to us through the Death and Resurrection
of Christ.

Christ’s new creation includes the whole universe, all people, and the earth that God has
given us.

All of us and the earth itself are to be renewed through him and restored to God.

Through his Death and Resurrection, Christ has established his Kingdom.

Jesus calls us as members of his Kingdom, his Church, to work together for justice,
love and peace. He carries on his new creation through us.

He calls us to work for social justice for all people and for social charity uniting all people.

Social justice means that we are called to work with others to change the sinful structures
and systems that go against the wellbeing of others, especially the poor and neglected.

Social charity, social love, means that we are called to work with others to make attitudes,
practices and institutions express respect, unity, and mutual care for all groups and in all groups.

Only through social justice and social love will unity and peace come to the world.

3. My Own Salvation? Does Jesus Love Me?

1) We believe God loves everyone, has died for everyone, but when it comes to ourselves, do
we doubt? Can Jesus really love me, did he really die for me? I am not worthy of his love.

2) Jesus is saying: “Come to me, I have covered your sin. It is wiped out by my blood.

Do not let my Death for you be in vain. It is precisely because of your unworthiness, your
sinfulness that I have died for you, to free you from all self-concern, to lift you up, to make
you worthy. You are transformed to be like me!

- 3) The Blood of Jesus overcomes our self-centredness, our seeking for ourselves, our shame, our distrust, and our doubt that we can be loved by Jesus and others.
- 4) His Blood overcomes the hatred, oppression, lust, greed, injustice and cruelty of the world.
- 5) When we go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we hear Jesus' personal words of forgiveness.
He gives us his Spirit to heal whatever our sins have done to us.
He gives us his light, power and love to live in him and have him live in us.

4. Mary's Role in Our Salvation

- 1) In today's Passion Reading, we hear how Mary stood at the foot of the Cross. She suffered with Jesus for our salvation. As she bears his suffering with him, Mary pleads that it may come to an end. Mary also pleads for the forgiveness and salvation of the two criminals hanging on the cross. One of them profits by her intercession and gets to heaven. Mary is the Refuge of Sinners.
- 2) By becoming the Mother of Jesus, Mary became the Mother of all of us. She has given us new life in Jesus, the life of the Spirit.
As she stood at the foot of the Cross, Jesus made explicit that Mary is the Mother of all of us. John the apostle standing with Mary, represented all of us. Jesus said to Mary: "Woman, here is your son." To John he said: "Here is your mother." By addressing Mary as "Woman", Jesus is speaking to her as the new Eve who brings forth the children of God.
- 3) Mary is our Intercessor in all our needs and distress. "Never was it known that anyone who sought her intercession was left unaided."

4. The Veneration of the Cross

- 1) In the time of Jesus, the Cross was a sign of infamy, the sign of execution of the worst criminals and traitors.
- 2) Now the Cross symbolizes our faith in the saving Death of Christ.
- 3) It is the most honoured symbol wherever Christians gather.
It is no longer a sign of shame and guilt, but a sign of our greatest hope, our greatest glory.
"We glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!"
- 4) As we look upon the Cross, we see the love of God for us, and our deliverance.
- 5) Now as we honour and venerate the Cross, may we pledge ourselves to Jesus to carry on his saving work, to bring his love, and justice, and peace to all the people in our lives.

(It is suggested that if the celebrant holds up the Cross for all the people to venerate, that they be asked to join hands, even across the aisle, and to offer a prayer for each other, explaining that Christ died to unite all the people of the world.)

5. Holy Communion

- 1) In Communion we receive the fruit of Jesus' saving Death. Jesus continues to come to us, reaching out over the ages to embrace us, and share all he is with us.
- 2) When Jesus comes to us in Communion, we receive Him, but we also receive all our fellow members who are in Him, joined with Him.
I cannot accept Jesus in Communion without accepting all my fellow members.
- 3) Jesus comes to us to make us all one in him, the goal of his Death on the Cross.
He prayed before his Death: "may they all be one, Father, as you in me, and I in you, may they be one in us."
- 4) As we receive Jesus, may we express our love and gratitude to him, and respond to his sacrifice for us by asking him to live in us, and to lead us to love and serve one another.

Do you believe in the Resurrection of Jesus?
How does believing in Jesus' Resurrection affect you?

1. The News of the Resurrection

- 1) We have just heard the proclamation of the Resurrection of Jesus, passed on to us from the time that he rose from the dead!
- 2) Now we have God's Word for it, proclaimed to us in the Gospel written in that time. We have the witness of those who found the empty tomb and had Jesus appear to them, and then to the rest of the Apostles.
- 3) Their experience of seeing the Risen Lord changed everything!
- 4) It brought the followers of Jesus out of their despair and desolation after the Crucifixion. It brought them together into a new community filled with enthusiasm and love.
- 5) They were the beginning of the Church. After being strengthened by the Holy Spirit, they commenced with great zeal to preach the good news of the Resurrection to the world.
- 6) Their living testimony has come down through all the centuries to us.
- 7) Moreover, the Risen Lord is present with us now. He makes himself present in the Mass, speaking to us in his Word of Scripture, and offering himself for us in the Eucharistic Prayer.
- 8) He gives witness of his presence in our lives and in the other members of the Church. The Church has endured because it is the living witness of the Resurrection of Jesus. The Church is the Body of Christ in whom Christ lives, its members joined together as the branches of the Vine that is Christ!
- 9) We can believe for ourselves. Christ is risen!

2. The Women

- 1) It was the faithful women like Mary Magdalene, Joanna and others, who were the first to discover that the Lord had risen and have him appear to them, and then bore witness to this.
- 2) On different occasions, Jesus brought forgiven sinners close to him and had them do things for him. On Easter Sunday morning, Jesus sent Mary Magdalene to tell the apostles of his Resurrection.
- 3) We owe so much to the steadfast faith and devotion of the women of the Church, to our Blessed Mother Mary and the other women who followed Christ in the beginning.
- 4) Women ever since have given solid witness to the reality of Christ in our lives.
- 5) They have shown their leadership and promoted all that is good for us.
- 6) Our mothers taught us our Faith and prayers, and saw that we went to the sacraments. My Mother explained the Faith to me, but I was also impressed by the way my father lived it.

3. Our Lives Are Changed

- 1) Jesus has risen! Our lives are changed! The world has been changed! The new creation has begun!
- 2) The light of the Risen Christ has come into a broken world.
- 3) Like the women, the Apostles and the first Christians, now we with the billion Catholics and the hundreds of millions of other Christians, show the love and power of the risen Jesus at work in us.
- 4) Jesus has made new persons of us, and the renewal and recreation of the world goes on through us and cannot be overcome!

4. Sunday

- 1) The new creation of the world is signified by Sunday, the Lord's Day.
- 2) Jesus rose from the tomb in the early hours of the darkness of Sunday.
- 3) Sunday marks the day of the beginning of the new transformed humanity in the new Adam, Jesus.
- 4) Before the Resurrection of Jesus, the day of worship for the Jews was the Sabbath, Saturday. For the Romans, Sunday was like any other day of the week.

- 5) Then the Apostles established Sunday as the Lord's Day, marking and celebrating his Resurrection.
- 6) Ever since, Christians and Christian countries around the world observe Sunday as a special day even if many do not realize its significance.
- 7) Sunday itself is a witness, a proof of the Resurrection.

5. Our Baptismal Promises

- 1) We are coming to the Renewal of our Baptismal Promises in this liturgy
- 2) It is through our Baptism that we have entered into the Death and Resurrection of Jesus and become new persons, with the way open to live eternally with Jesus.
- 3) Through our Baptism, the power of Jesus' Death and Resurrection has entered into us:
 - now we can die to sin in the power of his Death!
 - now we can live in the power of his Resurrection, the power of the Holy Spirit!
- 4) Through our Baptism, we have been made sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters in Christ!
- 5) Jesus has poured his Spirit into our hearts, giving us his light and power and love, so that he can live in us, work in us, and work through us for the people in our lives and for the people of our parish and community.

We should remember this every day and through the day!

- 6) By our Baptism, Jesus calls us to work with others in our parish and in society for a world of social justice and social love:
 - a world where all people share fairly in the goods of the earth and the life of society;
 - a world where all groups are treated with the respect and love and care owed to their human dignity
- 7) In our Baptism, Jesus has promised himself to us, to never stop loving us, even if we forget him, or turn away from him.
- 8) In our Renewal of our Baptismal Promises now, let us promise ourselves to Jesus and pledge to be faithful to him, to grow in love for him and our brothers and sisters in Christ
- 9) Let us respond "I do!" with faith and conviction, to the questions of rejecting sin, and living our faith in the Father, Son, Holy Spirit and the Church.

Our Mass

It is the power of our Baptism that makes us able to offer ourselves with Jesus in this Mass.
 Jesus takes us into his offering to receive the continuing power of his Death and Resurrection
 for our lives, that he may live in us more and more,
 that we may be a sign of his Resurrection for our world,
 that in him we conquer all evil and death itself!

TO THE USERS OF HOMILY NOTES:

It would be helpful to the writers of the Homily Notes to know how useful the Notes are in aiding you to preach applications of the Sunday Scripture Readings to the Church's Social Doctrine. Do you have any suggestions as to how we can make these Notes more useful to you? The Sunday homily is the primary way we can impart the Church's Social Doctrine to our people. Send your response to: Rev. Lloyd Cummings, at lcummings@foxrunbytheriver.com