

## EASTER HOMILY 2016

1. Death is death, life is life
  - a. Realists: this is an obvious truth
  - b. Look at animals, plants or humans we can tell whether something is dead or if it has life
  - c. There may be a short transition in dying where it is hard to distinguish
  - d. But if you give it a few days, it will be pretty obvious if something is dead or not
  - e. The realist, the scientist would say: once someone is dead there is not going back, he or she is dead
2. Yet there is something in the human spirit that rebels against this
  - a. We do not want to accept that death is final
  - b. Life is so precious that we do not want to believe that it can be lost forever
  - c. There have been attempts to come up with a theory to satisfy this longing
  - d. Greek theory was that there is an eternal soul trapped in a physical body
    - i. When we die we become this wispy spirit that floats around the universe
  - e. Hindus and Buddhists believe in constant cycle or rebirth without any memory of previous life
3. Israelites of OT were much more practical
  - a. They did not accept that there would be much value to life with the body
    - i. Our thoughts, our very personality is expressed through our body
    - ii. Without our body who would we be
    - iii. At first believed only thing to survived after death would be memories of the person so preserving the family name was a high priority
    - iv. The Pharisees promoted the idea that there would be a general resurrection
      1. The whole person body, spirit and soul would be raised up
      2. But this would only be at the end of time
4. Jesus comes along and makes a radical claim
  - a. You do not have to wait to the end of time
  - b. Jesus says I am the Resurrection and the Life, he who believes in me will never die
  - c. Life is more than wispy spirits, it is even more than physical bodies attached to spirits
  - d. Life is about knowing that God is living in us and we in God
  - e. God is offering us a life that begins in this world and cannot be destroyed even by physical death
5. Jesus in His Resurrection demonstrates the power of that unity with God
  - a. Jesus in His love for God and us allows Himself to become the ultimate sacrifice
  - b. Human pettiness, the desire for power, fear and betrayal conspire to destroy Jesus
  - c. Jesus is mocked as a failure, claim that He is Resurrection and life are laughed at
  - d. For three days it appears that Satan and death have won,
  - e. that there is nothing left to hope for
6. Suddenly that first Easter Jesus is alive,
  - a. more alive than ever before
  - b. He has the wounds of death, but they have no power over Him
  - c. Sometimes they recognize him, sometimes they do not
  - d. He promises to continue to be present to us through the power of the Holy Spirit
  - e. He offers us the hope of life that can never be destroyed

7. We can claim this life by uniting ourselves to Jesus
  - a. In the sacraments we as the Church unite ourselves to the mystery of Jesus
  - b. In baptism and Confirmation by the power of water and the Spirit we had the opportunity to die to the sin of Adam to rise in the life of Christ
  - c. We are anointed with the chrism of salvation so that God's Spirit transforms us into his people
  - d. In the Eucharist we are daily nourished with the bread of life, Jesus own Body and Blood
  - e. Jesus enters our bodies so that we become His body
  - f. Through the rest of the sacraments we experience the healing power of God and are called to be faithful in his service
8. When we cross the threshold of physical death, our eyes will be open
  - a. We will see god as he is
  - b. We will have the freedom and joy of unity with not just those who have died
  - c. We will also be able to be present to those in this life unable to see the mystery of heaven
  - d. We will have bodies that are unlimited by space and time, bodies beyond our understanding
9. As Christians we are confident that life and death are not as simple as they appear to many
  - a. We believe that life is merely changed not ended
  - b. Death is merely the doorway to real life
  - c. Life will not be emptiness,
  - d. Through the love of God we will experience life in its fullness
  - e. It will be a time so joyful and exciting that we will lose all sense of time and place