

'DEATH AND RESURRECTION' – HOMILY - 6 NOVEMBER 2016

During this past few days we have celebrated All Saints Day on Nov 1st, All Souls Days Nov 2nd and a Prayer Vigil for Peace Nov 4th.

Now in this weekend's 1st reading from 2nd Maccabees in the Old Testament, We hear the story of the seven brothers. A dramatic and traumatic reading, particularly if you read the whole chapter. Yet we see such faith in their belief in the [RESURRECTION](#) and [NEW LIFE](#).

Luke's Gospel today finds Jesus with the Sadducees, who lay a trap for him. The Pharisees also believe in the [RESURRECTION](#). We are not told if the Sadducees ever lay this trap for the Pharisees at other times. But today Jesus is the intended victim. Jesus doesn't fall for it. Instead, as a teacher, he reveals the understanding of a [LIVING GOD. FOR TO GOD ALL ARE, IN FACT, ALIVE.](#)

What is our attitude to dying and to new life? Below are some passages to reflect on over this week.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes (Matthew Chapter 5:1-12a) include,

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted".

Later in the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 11:28 Jesus says,

"Come to me, all you that are weary, and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

As we approach death, the issues of [FORGIVENESS](#) and [TRUST](#) can be critical. Let us turn to the example of Jesus.

In Luke's Gospel we note that Jesus

- Forgives those who have crucified him.
"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23/34)
- Forgives and welcomes the repentant sinner on the cross.
"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise". (Luke 23/43)
- Entrusts his spirit to the Father
"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit". (Luke 23/46)

John's Gospel contains [PROMISES TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE](#).

In John 11:25-26 Jesus says to Martha,

***"I am the resurrection and the life.
Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,
And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.
Do you believe this?"***

In John Chapter 14:2-4 come the **promises of dwelling places for us**
And that **Jesus will prepare a place for us and return to take us home.**

*"In my Father's house there are many dwelling places.
If it were not, would have I told you that I go to prepare a place for you?
And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to
myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.
And you know the way to the place where I am going".*

And in John 14:6 Jesus says,

*"I am the way, the truth, and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me."*

In the Gospels, we see accounts of the Risen Jesus appearing in Jerusalem, in Galilee and those who on a journey.

The Risen Jesus gave urban and rural and travelling appearances.

In Luke's Gospel chapter 24, Jesus **walks with two grieving disciples** on the road to Emmaus.

He gives them **TIME** to ask their questions.

Jesus walks with us in our grieving too.

He gives us time to ask our questions.

We are not alone.

When they invited Jesus to stay with them, they recognised him.

*"When he was at the table with them,
He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them".*

And we remember Jesus offering the wonderful gift of Eucharist (22/13-20) the night before he died.

And we touch the depth of Jesus' love offered in Eucharist.

In John chapter 20 in Jerusalem, the Risen Jesus **speaks to a distressed and grieving Mary of Magdala,**

***Gunai ti klaieis, Woman why are you weeping?
Tiva zeteis, Whom do you seek?***

Jesus talks to Mary with two basic questions,

The first – what is going on in our lives at this very moment?

The second – who are we seeking at this moment in our lives – are we seeking Jesus?

Mary finally recognises Jesus when he calls her name.

Jesus sends her to share the good news.

Later in John chapter 20, the Risen Jesus appears to the disciples in a closed room in Jerusalem, **closed because of their fear,**

And offers them **Eirene humin, "peace to you"**.

He shows them his hands and side, and the disciples, seeing this proof, *echaresan, rejoiced.*

Jesus once again says,

Eirene humin, "peace to you".

Jesus brings *peace to their fears*, and later **PEACE TO THEIR JOY** as he **COMMISSIONS** them.

In John Chapter 21, by the Sea of Galilee, the Risen Jesus asks Simon Peter,

agapas me, "do you love me?"

After inviting Peter into dialogue, Jesus says,

akolouthei moi, "follow me".

Even in our grieving Jesus offers us peace and concern and compassion.

Like Mary of Magdala and the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we are invited to recognise Jesus as he comforts us.

These are only a few examples of the many New Testament passages guiding us

As we ponder dying, forgiveness, trust, letting go, death, grieving, loving, hope, faith, resurrection and eternal life,

And as we open our hearts to accept the promises that Jesus offers.

We are invited as Christians to sit with a passage from Scripture

And to ask Jesus to show us its depth.

In the Holy Spirit we will be moved.

Let us pray.

Fr Gerry Hefferan – 'Death and Resurrection' – 6 November 2016

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/110616.cfm>]