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BISHOP'S CATECHESIS EASTER SUNDAY

Easter celebrates the full revelation of the divine power of the Risen Jesus, a power he offers each of us for our lives. St Paul proclaimed that nothing else in life compares with coming 'to know Christ and the power of his resurrection'. ^[1]

As we place before the Risen Jesus our life struggles and our temptations to sin, his power strengthens; our confusions, we find guidance; our griefs, consolation; our hurts, healing.

As we draw upon his power, we are strengthened in the face of challenges, sufferings and adversity. We are empowered increasingly to live his teachings, especially those we find really difficult.

We celebrate that the Risen Jesus is not just a historical figure whom we can 'know about'. He is a Person we can deepen in relationship with and actually 'know' more intimately. We grow to know him through experiences of his power in our daily lives.

It is a power which brings peace into our hearts and even deep joy as we offer sufferings in love for others. Being greater even than death, the power of Christ's resurrection is greater than any lesser human weakness or limitation. It is greater than sin. ^[2]

It can change our personalities so that we become more Christ-like. We grow in the divine life and love Jesus shared through the Spirit when we received Baptism, the Easter sacrament.

Our marriages and family lives, our friendships, work and other relationships can improve as we grow in our capacity to express Christ-like love, understanding, forgiveness, resilience, patience and compassion.

Drawing upon Christ's power for our lives

In the gospels, we read of people approaching Jesus personally to seek his power for their lives. So people across the earth could do so in the future until the end of the world, Jesus instituted the sacraments for the same purpose. We can draw upon his power through the different gifts the Risen Jesus gives through the Spirit as we go to him to seek them.

The sacraments, therefore, are the primary means Jesus gave his Church for drawing upon his resurrection power for our daily lives. Each Sacrament offers us particular gifts which relate to different life needs.

^[1] Philippians 3:10

^[2] Romans 5:20

Through the Sacrament of Matrimony, for example, for the Risen Jesus is present with husband and wife always. As couples share with him in prayer their relationships and families, they can experience their love for each other being purified. Christ strengthens them 'to take up their crosses, to rise again after they have fallen, to forgive one another, to be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ, and to love one another with supernatural, tender and fruitful love'. ^[3]

If a married couple separate, the Risen Jesus does not desert them. He helps them to remain faithful to their vows, as well as sustains them as they try to work out their future lives, especially in relation to their children.

Of all the sacraments, the Eucharist, is the greatest means for all who seek to draw upon the power of the Risen Jesus. We meet him who is present body and soul, divine and human. We need to prepare for its celebration by intentionally placing before the Lord our struggles, difficulties, questions and problems.

Finally, we draw upon the power of Christ's resurrection by daily prayer in which we talk in conversation about our daily lives and where we need his help.

Let us renew our faith in the Risen Jesus and the divine power he offers each of us for our daily lives. Happy Easter!

Our Mission from Christ

As opportunities arise in our families and among people elsewhere, let us help them to remember

- The Risen Jesus is offering them the power of his Resurrection for their life issues and challenges
- He empowers to live his teachings, particularly those we find difficult, and to bring peace to our hearts
- We can draw upon their power through the Eucharist and other sacraments, and through daily prayer.

9th April 2023

^[3] Catechism of the Catholic Church 1642