

**EASTER SUNDAY YEAR C HOMILY 2022**  
**FAITH OVER DOUBT – JESUS LIVES AND SO DO WE**  
*Lk 24.1-12                      AA 10.34-43                      1Cor 5.6-8*

Who said this? *“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness. It was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity. It was the season of light, it was the season of darkness. It was the spring of hope; it was the winter of despair. We had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way – in short, the period was so far like the present period that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on it being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only”*. From 1859, *“A Tale of Two Cities”*, London and Paris, in the midst of the French Revolution in 1789. Charles Dickens, himself a rather flawed human being, but brilliant author and social justice advocate, reflects on the complexities and contradictions of the realities of life and death.

Recently, a good friend emailed me: *“Dear John. Am feeling very heavy at present. How about you? There is just too much sad stuff happening in our world today. Sadness overload...”*! And don't we all feel this at times, weighed down by the things going wrong in our lives and our world. The whole COVID experience has created a bit of a fog for all of us, as we try to find our way out of it, with appropriate precautions! The best of intentions can be thwarted, as I've found, in continuing isolation due to a persistent enduring cough at present, so the best I can do is to share these few thoughts, reflecting on the need to hope and to live in the light, as the song says.

Can't we feel the confusion, uncertainty and frustration, even anger, within ourselves, as we look at our own world today, particularly in recent times, over the last 2 years. And now we see a world overshadowed by war, suffering, dispossession, destruction and death, for no good reason. We ask why, without any good answers. We have the ongoing issues of climate change and associated natural disasters near and far, wondering why more is not being done to address the fundamental issues facing our common humanity in our fragile world.

We seek meaning, goodness, love and peace in our lives and the lives of others, realizing that we are imperfect beings in an imperfect world, but with the potential to live life well and to find fulfilment and happiness where and when we can.

From a faith perspective, the Easter message is enduring, in that faith tells us Jesus truly lives, our focus changing from Jesus' farewell call to service of each other of Holy Thursday, to the darkness, injustice, horror and inhumanity of Good Friday, now to a challenge to live in the light, and so to reflect his love and peace in our hearts, in the spirit of Easter joy.

It's more than about chocolate, although the egg symbolism is not a bad metaphor for new life emerging from the protective shell to face the reality of the world around us. Jesus emerges from the empty tomb, not to be immediately recognized, but it's the women in Luke's Gospel who are the first to realize that his promise of resurrection is real, and who pass on the good news, as *apostles to the apostles*. His presence and his message endures as we gather in his name, and commit ourselves to reflecting his call to faith, hope and love in our lives.

Andrew Hamilton SJ writes about: ***“Deep calling on deep”***:

*“In its beginning, Easter was not a celebration of the continuity of good times, but of the happy disruption of bad times. Life and hope flared out from where death and darkness had reigned. Easter represented the victory of life over death, of victory over a crushing defeat, connection over isolation, freedom over captivity, and hope over despair. It is an exuberant feast, in which the overflow of joy is measured by the depths of grief which preceded it.”*

In the Easter edition of The Tablet – Joy Marie Clarkson (perhaps appropriately named!) ponders: ***“The goodness of life”***, asking: *“Is it OK to be happy when the world is falling apart?”* In reflecting on her niece's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, I quote her: *“Lilian Joy, uncomplicatedly happy, radiant in her 4-ness, utterly unworried, wrapped in the excesses of love. Yet, as I smile, I catch myself feeling guilty. Is it OK to be happy in this fragile world of ours?... Even in the best of times, someone, somewhere is always suffering. The past 2 years have not been the best of times. How do we live well in these times? Must we suspend happiness?... Cultivating a life of joy, which nourishes others is one of the most generous and practical*

*things you could do to make the world a better place... When I watch my little niece dance, I am reminded that we humans are made for so much more than sorrow and desperation and anger. My happiness is born not only of thankfulness but of defiance: a refusal to 'praise the devil.'* Her book is titled: ***"Aggressively Happy: A Realist's Guide to Believing in the Goodness of Life."***

***"Resurrection is not resuscitation: It doesn't just restore the status quo. What many of us are longing for in 2022, is a love that says yes to our pain, and carries us beyond it to something genuinely new."*** Thus suggests Natasha Moore, of the Centre for Public Christianity.

And so let us be Easter people who view ourselves and the world around us with hope and joy, finding the positives, and facing up to the crosses of life, which inevitably weigh us down at times, with glass half-full, not empty, as we acknowledge: ***"He lives, and so do we!"*** And don't overdo the chocolate!!

A happy and safe Easter to all.

***john hannon***

***17<sup>th</sup> April 2022***