



I have always felt that it is easier to preach a sermon on Good Friday rather than on Easter Sunday. That may sound strange to you since Easter is such a day of joy and Good Friday is a time of sadness and sorrow. But the truth is we are all very familiar with death and loss, pain and suffering. It does not take faith to believe in death; it is such a very real part of our journey of life. We have all

lost family members and friends and it has broken our hearts. We have read about mass shootings, holocausts, savage wars, epidemics, accidents, natural disasters, and famines where hundreds and thousands of people have died. We know that no one, not even us, will escape an ending to our natural life.

Ah, but resurrection is harder to see and capture with words. But I believe, as the Scriptures promise: life is stronger than death, and we do feel in our bones, in our hearts, in our souls that there life beyond what we see here on earth. I think these words of the great American playwright Thornton Wilder capture that reality with these words from his great play *Our Town* that are spoken by the stage manager to the audience: *We all know that something is eternal. And it ain't houses and it ain't names, and it ain't earth, and it ain't even the stars . . . everybody knows in their bones that something is eternal, and that something has to do with human beings. All the greatest people ever lived have been telling us that for five thousand years and yet you'd be surprised how people are always losing hold of it. There's something way down deep that's eternal about every human being. You know that.*

We are blessed to live in an area with a change of climate. As the death of winter passes, we delight and cherish the new life that is breaking forth all around us. Nature proclaims resurrection and new life. We live this amazing cycle every year. An even more obvious one for is night and day, sleep and being awake. Even though I try to stay up and watch the last innings of the Met game, my eyes grow heavy and I move to sleepiness. We sleep and cease to be alive to the world around us. Then, at 6:00 am, my radio announces that the Mets have lost another game. The day has begun. As much as a life can be a routine, I have never found that no two days have even been exactly the same. Each day has its own experiences and nuances. It is new day. What will the day bring? Could we not say

that each day we awake is a sort of mini-resurrection that speaks to of the divine reality of eternal life promised by Jesus?

Any analogy discussing the Resurrection of Jesus will be inadequate for this awesome mystery, but I thinking of two stories that have been in the recent news that speak to me of moving from death to life. The first may strike you a bit of stretch, but I am thinking of Tiger Woods, my long lost cousin, who recently won the Masters Golf Tournament to the great shock of all experts. Now aspects of the golfer life in the past do not make him a candidate for canonization. Still, as I thought all that he has experienced in the last decade, public humiliation brought on my his actions, a significant number of injuries that demanded serious surgeries, and very process of an athlete getting older and losing some skills, I felt he would never win a big tournament again. He himself was ready to retire two years ago since his back was so bad. Now he is on the cover of magazine and most recognized athlete in America and, for me, an image of resurrection.

The second image of resurrection, of moving from death to life, that I have been feeling is that of the tragic fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, a church which I had the opportunity to once visit. The initial reactions of the citizens of Paris, and people throughout the world, to seeing their beloved icon in flames, were to weep. But, when I saw the people of one of the most secularized countries in Europe, in particular the young, watching the flames as they sang hymns and recited the rosary, I saw a faith, perhaps that had been buried deep in the hearts of many, come to life for a time. Then, I watched in awe as many men and women risked their lives to recover the sacred images, relics and art from the church, it was again to know that this 800 year old cathedral was not just a museum to the past, but a proclamation of faith. Then, flowed the immediate promises of the rich and poor, secular and religious, to speak to reality that the serious damage must be repaired and the glory of Notre Dame restored. Death to Life!

Resurrection! When I first watched the fire on the news, I thought maybe it is terrorism. It clearly seems not to have been. And in world where Christians and Moslems often experience great mistrust of one another, I was happy to read the following: Kamel Kabtane,, a leader of the French Moslem community said the following: *"We call on Muslims in France to show their solidarity by actively participating in the national solidarity campaign that will be launched to find ways to rebuild this place of history of our country and this place of prayer so dear to our Christian brothers. A hint of resurrection and new life!*

For two thousand years we have been proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus. I will conclude with the words of one of the greatest witness of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. St Paul the Apostles says, *The first thing I did was place before you what was placed so emphatically before me: that the Messiah died for our sins, exactly as Scripture tells it; that he was buried; that he was raised from death on the third day, again exactly as Scripture says; that he presented himself alive to Peter, then to his closest followers, and later to more than five hundred of his followers all at the same time, most of them still around (although a few have since died); that he then spent time with James and the rest of those he commissioned to represent him; and that he finally presented himself alive to me.*