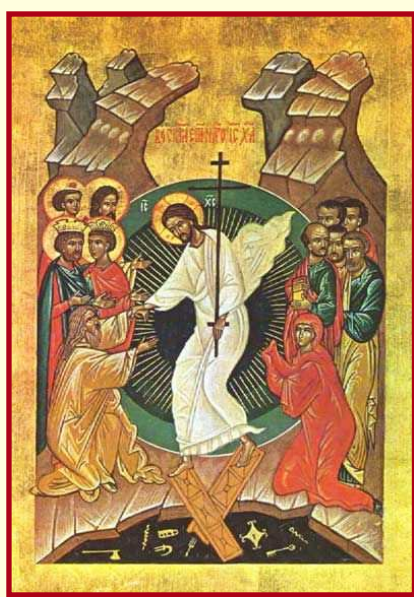


Reflection from the Superior General

For many people Easter weekend is celebrated with friends and family, with sports events and taking “a bit of a break”. This year the Covid virus puts a dark cloud over some of these celebrations, but people do the best they can. There may be the hope that in the midst of all these celebrations people remember the joy of the Resurrection. Well, perhaps!

For Christians, this week is the most significant and beautiful time of our year. The Good News is that we are freed from fear, darkness and sin, by the saving event of Christ’s life, death and resurrection. This is the heart of our faith. “If we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him” (Rom. 6:8).



The saving mysteries of Holy Week are absolutely at the heart of our Religious Life. The central challenge of Religious Life, as a particular vocation within the Church, is to embrace our baptismal call, dying and rising with Christ, in the manner of Christian martyrs, past and present. It is easy for us as Religious to allow ourselves to become “distracted by many things” and then Religious Life loses its authenticity and becomes anaemic. The spiritual writers call this “acedia”.

These holy days invite us to renew our Religious and Christian Life in all its depth of vitality and joy by re-committing ourselves to following Jesus Christ, the Revelation of the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit. This has practical consequences in our ministries of love-in-action. Nothing less will do. It is true that we are called to live “simply and modestly, close to the lives of the ordinary people” (Constit.117), and we Marists would not want it any other way, but only as our particular way, constantly renewed, of expressing our explicit and faithful discipleship of Jesus Christ.

One consequence of entering into the central mystery of Holy Week is our awful, growing realization that the bruised and tortured body of Christ, whom we remember in our Liturgy, is incarnated still in the sufferings and abuses of so many of our brothers and sisters today.

During the Holy Thursday Liturgy the words and actions of Jesus challenge us to become a priestly people who kneel in service of our sisters and brothers, nourishing them well with the Word and the Eucharist, and feeding the hungry of our world in so many different ways.

Like Mary and the other disciples at the foot of the cross at Golgotha, we choose to stay with those who are suffering. We grieve and lament and cry out for justice. As on the first Good Friday, we may wish to flee with those who fearfully run away from suffering and death. The Good Friday Liturgy challenges us to remain faithful, like Mary, to those who are rejected. We respond with compassionate love and prophetic voice at the Golgotha of where we find ourselves today, if we follow our particular way of the cross.

We can be overwhelmed by the silence of our doubts, insecurities and failings on Holy Saturday. We question our own faith. This can happen increasingly as we grow older. Holy Saturday is the time to be patient and quiet with ourselves and with others in our doubts, humbly believing in God’s saving grace.

The radiant joy of Easter Sunday morning is no cheap grace. After the winter of the preceding days – dark and cold – there is hope of new life, a new spring, the life of Jesus Risen, if only we have the eyes of faith to see and believe and the voice to proclaim the Good News.

A blessed Holy Week and Easter!

John Larsen s.m.