



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time-Year C-February 17th 2019

***Readings: Jeremiah 17: 5-8, Psalm 1, 1 Corinthians 15: 12 16-20,
Luke 6: 17 20-26***

Every Mass is an act of love. It is an act of love by God for us in the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross for you and for me.

Every Mass is an act of love. It is an act of love by us for God and for one another and for those for whom we pray.

Every Mass is a celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Every Mass is a celebration of His triumph over sin and death and His longing to bring Fallen Man with Him into the original destiny of life in the Eternal Presence.

Mass has been offered, down the millennia, in great basilicas in gorgeous raiment and beautiful liturgy.

Mass has been offered in the prison camps of the condemned and on the altar stones of the bog masses of the persecution.

Mass has been offered in the great cathedrals and in the wayside chapels, in the infirmaries of the sick and at the bedside of the dying.

Mass has been offered in the ancient ruins of our ancestors hallowed places from the heights of Tintagel's windswept promontory to the priest hole of Golden.

Mass is offered in the daily ordinary of our parish churches and mission stations.

A million people gather for Mass with the Holy Father. A dozen meet around the altar here on a weekday.

It is the same Mass. It is the same proclamation of the Gospel. It is the same invocation of the Real Presence of Christ. It is the same joining with the saints and angels and the whole company of Heaven to give glory to God. It is the same miracle of transubstantiation on the altar, the same Heavenly food, the same viaticum for mortal Man.

Today's reading from St. Paul's first letter to the Church at Corinth reminds us just what it is that, as followers of Jesus, we believe.

This brief passage is but a preface to Paul's great exposition on the miracle of the Resurrection which occupies the rest of the chapter. Brief but vital. In it St. Paul is dealing with a resurgence of the teaching of the dreaded Sadducees, the establishment court party, who never believed in the Resurrection of the dead. Paul refreshes and restates the central Gospel claim.

Jesus, God incarnate, has taken on our mortal humanity, overcome sin and defeated death by His sacrifice on the Cross and triumphant Resurrection. If that is not true, St. Paul says, if there is no resurrection from the dead, if this life is all there is, if there is no future hope, no prospect of eternity, if we are but recycled matter, the dust of dead stars, not made in the image of God but a mere temporary agglomeration of molecules THEN.....Christ did not rise from the dead. We are still in our sins. Those who have died in Christ are lost forever and that will be our fate also. The Church is talking sentimental nonsense and it would be better to shut it down and face facts. Of all people, Paul says, we would be the most to be pitied for our reckless clinging to an unrealistic fantasy.

Those are the stakes in the spiritual war between pagan materialism and the truth. They could not be higher. On the outcome of that decision rides how we determine everything else, how we run our lives, our community, our society.

If Man has no future beyond what our physical senses determine. If we are but a mobile sack of pre-compost. If there is no resurrection from the dead, no integrity of the person, body and soul, no principle of the divine life flowing from and to the Creator, then we can have no quarrel with those calculators of human misery who hold the material view. We can have no quarrel with the demented social Darwinism of Hitler's final solution. We cannot jibe at Stalin's mass murder of millions to defend the philosophy of the Marxist state nor Marat's calculations of the necessary death toll to safeguard the French Revolution. We cannot oppose their philosophical heirs, politicians and practitioners alike, who queue up to advocate and implement the destruction of the innocent, to murder the future, and who now long to batten their perverse 'mercy' on the infirm and the old, the depressed and the mentally fragile. These pagan materialists, wrap it up how you will, are all cut from the same cloth. It is the flag of deliberate surrender to the demonic, to the ancient enemy of Man.

St. Paul understands all this. The Resurrection matters because it is true. The Resurrection matters because it demolishes the lie of pagan materialism. The Resurrection matters because it declares, unequivocally, that, in coming to dwell in our humanity, God has incarnated the truth of *imago dei*, that Man is made in the image of God. The Resurrection matters because, in the triumph of Christ over sin and death, Man is shown his purpose, his future and his hope.

The Resurrection matters because it is the supreme declaration of God's love for Man. That is the central proclamation of the Church and the

manifesto of her mission on earth.

When people and cultures turn away from that supreme truth they do not long lodge in a no-man's land before reverting to the murderous tyranny of paganism and its hatred of Man.

Where we are now in our culture and history makes it clear that the Gospel of the Resurrection remains the supreme, the eternal and the only hope of Man. If we love our fellow man we should not be shy in promoting that foundational truth. With our crucified and risen Lord, we stand for the sanctity of life and for the love of God and the love of Man. This is both the heart of the Mass and the engine of our mission.