

EASTER (B)

Eostre, from which Easter is derived, was a pagan Anglo-Saxon Goddess of the dawn or sunrise. The point of sunrise, the East, is named after her. The Church invested it with new meaning. The sunrise disperses the darkness of the night. Christ scatters the darkness of sin and death and Satan. Paradise, forfeited as the sin of our First Parents, Adam and Eve is regained by the new Adam and the New Eve.

Resurrection is the central teaching of our Faith and the onus is on us as Christians to uphold and defend it especially before unbelievers.

From a rational point of view, it is easier to believe in the Resurrection than not to. Science tells us that nothing in nature, not even the tiniest particle, can disappear without a trace. Nature does not know extinction - all it knows is transformation. The dead leaves of last year, for instance, are nourishing new growth this year. At this time of the year we also see the natural world awakening to new life. But since we humans are the cream of God's creation, life would be meaningless if death were to signal the end of our existence followed by an eternity of nothingness and emptiness.

Don't we feel uplifted when people remember our birthday? They say that the best way for a husband to remember his wife's birthday is to forget it once. Those who send us cards and presents are letting us know that our birth was not an accident or a mistake but part of God's plan. We could call our birthday a resurrection moment. These resurrection moments, however, point to a deeper spiritual longing which God has sown within the human heart. It is an eternal seed, a yearning for that fullness of life and love which only He can ultimately satisfy in the life to come.

However, Eternal life must begin in the here and now if we ever hope to possess it eternally. It's not an abstract truth. For instance, whenever we have our love rejected and we love

again - that's resurrection. Whenever we pick up the pieces of a broken life and, with God's grace, begin again - that's a renaissance moment. Whenever we turn our backs on the culture of death, or anything which dehumanizes people, we are resurrection people. Whenever we forgive or are forgiven there is renewal all round.

At Easter we celebrate the Lord's 'Passover' from death to life. We join him in that Passover at our baptism and the sprinkling of holy water, shortly to follow, will remind us of this. As we hold aloft our lighted candle aloft let us proudly proclaim our allegiance to Christ our Risen Lord and renew our commitment to Him.