

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily  
Sunday, April 20, 2025  
Easter Sunday  
Cycle C

One Easter a priest and a taxi driver both died and went to heaven. St. Peter was at the Pearly gates waiting for them. Come with me; said St. Peter to the taxi driver. The taxi driver did as he was told and followed St. Peter to a mansion. It had everything you could imagine from a bowling alley to an Olympic size pool. 'Oh my God, thank you, said the taxi driver. Next, St. Peter led the priest to a rough old shack with a bunk bed and a little old television set. Wait, I think you are a little mixed up, said the priest. Shouldn't I be the one who gets the mansion? After all I was a priest, went to church every day, and preached God's word. Yes, that's true. St. Peter replied, but during your Easter sermons people slept. When the taxi driver drove, everyone prayed.

Jesus rose from the dead in power! This is the Easter proclamation: Sin is not the final word. Evil is not the champion. Hatred is not the slogan of humanity. Sadness is not our plight.

Easter proclaims Jesus risen and powerful to give life to the dead and also to us who live in hope of seeing him and experiencing him. How does this happen? It happens when we open our hearts. The empty tomb became a source of joy because Jesus showed his power within it. Our hearts must also

be like the empty tomb. The power of Jesus must shine within and he must hold central place there.

In Lent, through prayer, fasting, and sacrifice, through confession and devotions, we have unloaded the garbage of our hearts before the Lord. If you have done this, you know what I mean. You know what Joy there is in following the Lord. If not, then we have wasted another year of our lives. Yes, the power of the risen Lord is within us who listen to him, receive him in the sacraments, and follow him in our daily life of failure and struggles.

The resurrection is our one hope and the inspiration of our lives. St. Paul says to the Corinthians that the resurrection is the power that moves us and strengthens us in our daily lives: But if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then empty too is our preaching; empty, too, your faith. Then we are also false witnesses to God, because we testified against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable people of all. But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

In this modern world, the media can ignore Jesus all they want. The secular world can downplay his influence in our world. But Christians will continue to proclaim and live the mystery and power of the resurrection of Jesus. By his resurrection, he embraced the dead hoping in him and brought them life. He brings life to us as well, not only at the moment of our death, but every moment of our lives.

Open your hearts to the Lord Let your hearts be empty of everything, unload all baggage in your life, so that Jesus can reign in you. For indeed He is alive, He is Risen from the dead. Alleluia, Alleluia.