



Homily – Easter Sunday 2011 (A) ⁱ

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Archbishop of Los Angeles*

*Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels
April 24, 2011*

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Today we rejoice with all the earth. Jesus Christ is alive, *Alleluia!* His radiant light fills the world! The darkness has vanished forever! It is indeed a day of great joy.

But today, as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, we continue to pray for our brothers and sisters at St. John Vianney parish community in Hacienda Heights, as they celebrate Easter following the fire that destroyed their church.

There is always redemption and resurrection — in our Church and in our lives.

There is always a rising from the ashes.

We pray that they will rise from this period of trial with a greater awareness of God's love in their lives. We pray that they will know redemption and resurrection, and the rising from the ashes.

That's exactly what we celebrate today. This is the great hope of this holy season. Jesus Christ has risen today! To be with us once more! *Alleluia!*

He has scattered the darkness in our hearts and minds! He has turned the evil that some meant against him into good — that all might be brought to the glory of new life. ⁱⁱ

Christ's resurrection, my brothers and sisters, is the "proof" that God provides to assure us that his Gospel and teachings are true.

Because of the resurrection, we can be sure that whoever believes in Christ has eternal life.

Because of the resurrection, we can be sure that if we eat his flesh and drink his blood, he will raise us up on the last day. ⁱⁱⁱ

So my brothers and sisters, this beautiful Easter morning we pray with new confidence.

Our Lord has overcome the world! And we know that we can too.

Our lives are now hidden in Christ, St. Paul tells us in today's second reading. We are new creations. We are alive with the new life of Jesus Christ! We abide in God and God abides in us. God is with us.

Now we seek the things that are above, the things of God. We live now by the new law of love that Jesus has shown us by his passion and death.

What our Lord showed us on Holy Thursday and Good Friday — washing his disciples' feet and enduring his passion and death on the cross — must become the pattern for our lives. As he said and we all remember: "I have given you an example...that you also should do as I have done!"^{iv}

We are called to follow Christ, to imitate him. To find our lives in losing them. To love by laying down our lives for our brothers in self-denial and works of love and mercy.

We are called to live our lives beautifully, to present our lives as living sacrifices to God. To offer everything we do as a spiritual sacrifice of praise.^v

This is what St. Peter means in today's first reading when he says that we are called to bear *witness* to Christ in his resurrection.

My brothers and sisters, we must be witnesses of Jesus' resurrection.

We are called to testify to the difference that his resurrection makes in our lives!

We are called to love and to be loved! To tell the world that Christ has risen, that he has made us children of our Father in heaven!

The work of our own resurrection — to be witnesses of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in our lives — is the work of our lifetime. To live in God, we must continually set out on the path of dying to sin and death, and living in the imitation of Christ.

Just a few days ago, Monday evening, we had another beautiful celebration here at our Cathedral, the Chrism Mass, when we bless the holy oils that we use for the celebration of the sacraments.

And on that beautiful evening, I asked my brother priests that were here present — there were 500 of them here from all over the archdiocese — I asked that we work together to make Los Angeles "a city of charity," a place where the love of God and the love for one another is made present every single day.

My brothers and sisters, that challenge — to make our beautiful city of Los Angeles a city of the love of God — is not just for the priests. It is for all of us. It is our challenge. To make a city of charity here in Los Angeles — a city where the love of God is shown in the respect for human life from conception to natural death; a place where we live together as brothers and sisters; a place where we help each other; a place where we go out of our way to take care of our brothers and sisters in need. This is our challenge as Catholics. This is our challenge as witnesses of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today we have to ask for the grace, as we rejoice in this beautiful celebration, to make this a reality. That our city, the City of the Angels, be made a city of charity, a city of the love of God.

I also wanted to especially ask you to listen today to the words of our Holy Father. This morning at the end of his Easter message, he said these words that I think are very important for us.

He said: “Dear brothers and sisters, the risen Christ is journeying ahead of us towards the new heavens and the new earth.” That’s what we are celebrating today: Jesus who is risen and walking in front of us.

“He is with us,” the Holy Father said, “the end of time. Let us walk behind him, in this wounded world, singing *Alleluia*. In our hearts there is joy and sorrow, on our faces there are smiles and tears. Such is our earthly reality. But Christ is risen, he is alive and he walks with us. For this reason we sing and we walk, faithfully carrying out our task in this world with our gaze fixed on heaven.”

My brothers and sisters, let us ask for the grace to walk behind Jesus Christ, bringing his love, the joy of his resurrection, the love of God for each one of us — in our daily lives making our beautiful city, a city of the love of God.

So this holy morning, when the angel shows us the empty tomb, let us ask the intercession of Our Lady of the Angels, patroness of this great cathedral and Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Let us ask her help to renew our joy and peace in the Risen Christ.

Because it is true: Jesus Christ has risen today, *Alleluia!*

ⁱ Readings: Acts 10:34, 37–43; Psalm 118:1–2, 16–17, 22–23; Colossians 3:1–4; John 20:1–9

ⁱⁱ See Gen. 50:29.

ⁱⁱⁱ John 3:15; 6:40.

^{iv} John 13:15.

^v Matt. 16:24–25; 1 John 3:16–18; Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:5.