

## EASTER SUNDAY

Behind the fanfare of eggs and bunnies, or whatever else that exists, Easter is when we celebrate the sacred mysteries, sometimes called paschal mysteries. These mysteries are divine and thus most profound. You cannot quite grasp all that lies within them for such is their depth. The mysteries are three – all good things come in three – the suffering, dying and rising of the Lord Jesus. On the third day, not a 24 hour day, but a calendar day, early in the morning, may be 3 am, the Lord arose – that is, resurrected from the dead.

In the Gospel, we note that other disciple (who was John and being younger) arrived before Peter but waited for him to go in first. Ask yourself who was faithful at the Cross, John or Peter? John was the beloved faithful one and so he had every right to go in first but doesn't. Why not? Out of respect for the Petrine office, the head of the Apostles. It's a good lesson on obedience: respect the office irrespective of the officer.

Be very clear that his resurrection was utterly unlike any other. Why? In his public ministry, Jesus worked three resurrection miracles. But they differed to his own. How? These are the four differences.

1. He rose by his own power – they were raised by another.
2. He rose in a glorious body – they returned to their same bodies to die again.
3. He foretold his resurrection – no one else has foretold it.
4. He rose in a salvific manner with promissory value.

This last point is obtuse. We mean that the Lord's resurrection was planned as part of the providential plan of which we are included. How is that so? We who are born into his grace and die in his love will rise in the next life with not a recycled body but with a glorious body like his. What is a glorious body? It has four unique characteristics: Integrity, Subtlety, Agility, Clarity.

The notion of *integrity* or wholeness also embraces the term *impassibility* – the inability to suffer or endure pain. The risen body will truly be a new creature, devoid of all defects. For some who were missing limbs, hair or sight in this life the prospect is most encouraging! The new integrated version will be utterly pristine without warts, wrinkles, weight issues, aches or pains, etc. The next time you visit the burns or orthopaedic wards of a hospital keep in mind this fascinating insight so as to invigorate a lasting hope in any disabled patients.

The quality of *subtlety* is most fascinating. Daily our bodily nature, akin to the animals, weakens and lessens the spiritual powers of the soul. When we are tired or sick we don't think so well and when emotionally bereft make poor choices. The material burdens the spiritual, the soul is weighed down by our physical nature. In heaven this polarity will be reversed. The spiritual will command the material, our body will submit to the desires of the will and intellect. Such a transformation will enable us to alter our physical features for the sake of some spiritual good, as did Christ whose recognition was veiled as a gardener to Mary Magdalen or a wayfarer to the disciples on the way to Emmaus (cf. Luke 24:13).

Related to subtlety is *agility*, which enables the body to move at the speed of thought. Matter will be subservient to the power of the spirit. This marvellous quality likens us to 'superheroes'! One wonders if hidden in this quality there prevails some unconscious probe that results in our fascination and creation of these fictional characters. I would prefer to be more like Superman soaring through the clouds than the Hulk stomping on boulders!

This last quality, *clarity* enables the splendour of the soul to shine forth through the body. In some fashion the body will glow from within somewhat like those salt lamps that are now popular in lounge rooms! In that vein, then, the need for clothes may be superfluous, as we shall be robed with spiritual light according to those virtues that we manifested here on earth.

Let us, thus, be like St Mary Magdalen who came to the tomb when it was still dark and persevered in her pursuit of God's presence and so was rewarded with his appearance.