



Allocutio



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Allocutio: The Risen Jesus is Our Lord.

The heart of the Catholic Faith is Jesus Christ. For us he is everything. There never has been a person who has done for us what he did nor one who deserves our love and adoration such as he does.

We are in the week of the celebration of the Paschal Mystery. Even in this week we do not forget the wretched suffering and death he put up with on our behalf, a most unjust sentence, a most undeserved treatment at the hands of a humanity which seemed to load every last speck of hate and maliciousness on him although he was guilty of nothing. And how he bore it. With great dignity, truly regal and forgiving us all.

Those who witnessed it, the women, John, the roman soldiers and the Jewish sneerers, saw what he suffered and witnessed the goodness of it. John in his account of the Magdalene at the tomb tells us that she wept, kept weeping and even when Jesus first addressed her she was still weeping. Her heart was broken by what she had seen. Mary his mother is not mentioned. Her grief is more private and like her Son, dignified. But the Magdalene's weeping shows the extent they were so hurt by it. They all knew he did not deserve this and his heroic bearing of it only confirmed their view that, as the centurion said, "This was a good man. This was a Son of God".

Our problem is that we are so far removed from it. But we do need to reflect and enter into the horror of it so that we can sense the utter joy of the Resurrection. The women clasped his feet, they fell and adored him. When he came into the upper room, after realising it was he, they were overcome with joy. This good man, this chap they had believed in and given all to, who had seemingly been struck down and wiped out had trumped them all. He had been absolutely destroyed and yet he was here Risen in a new life form. This triumph just magnified everything they had ever known about him and changed how they saw him. He was the Lord. The Lord of life and death, the Lord of sin and shame, the Lord of Creation and Heaven. He would dominate their lives from then on.

And it is this Lord whom we still worship and adore and follow. You cannot bypass a guy who rose from the dead. He above anyone else deserves respect and paying attention to. He is the centre of our faith and our Church and everything in the Church swings around him and is centred on him. If we really believe that it is him who underwent such a passion for us and has risen to a new life, then we must hold him in deep awe and truly reverence him. I can hear Our Lady saying to us: "There is my lamb, The Lamb of God who has taken away your sins. Do whatever he tells you. He is the way, the truth and the life. There is no one else you can go to. He has the message of eternal life."



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This brings us to the matter of faith. He is available to us all. We should develop a deep friendship with him. He is more than open to each of us, offering us a true healthy companionship in which he will advise us, encourage us, support us and remain utterly faithful. And let no sin block you coming to him because if some sinful tendency keeps tripping you up he is your hope.

He is above all present with us and to us in the Eucharist. And so we should have a deep reverence for what we celebrate in it: both that dreadful and bloody sacrifice but also his Risen presence in the Eucharist. And like the women and disciples who met him may he receive from us who receive him in the Sacraments a true welcome, a deep appreciation and utter gratitude. Let us never be afraid to seek him out and develop a unique relationship with him.

Everything in the life of the Church centres on him. Our prayers, our liturgies, our celebration of the Sacraments, our rules. I have been doing a series of talks on Canon Law for Radio Maria. And it is funny how sometimes when you teach you begin to learn more yourself. And what I have seen in so many of the canons is that they only make real sense if you see them as calling us into a life of deep devotion to Jesus. If you only see Canon Law from a secularist point of view you only see a set of rules which make no sense. If you are devoted to Jesus as the great hero who deserves our total love and devotion the rules take on a new meaning.

In fact one of my concerns is that across Europe there has been a tendency to erase Jesus from religion. You visit a Cathedral or Church in France and they explain who did the stain-glass window, put some vague meaning on it, describe the gothic arches and the work needed to complete the building but the very reason they built it, who it is all for, that it is a place where we meet the Lord Jesus, the Risen one, is missed and so also the full explanation of all the Cathedral is and its truth.

The bishop or the parish priest is not the centre of the Cathedral nor the parish church. It is always Jesus, our victorious and Risen Lord, the only hope we have as we face the mysteries of life and death. In this Eastertime let's deepen our faith in him and deepen our love for him. And let us never forget that he is present to us in the Eucharist especially. Indeed I note how the Feast of Corpus Christi comes at the end of Easter. The Eucharist is our risen Lord present and walking with us on our Christian journey.

Amen.

Fr Paul Churchill