Easter 2020

MDP of God

He is Risen—Alleluia--Happy Easter!—This Easter is of course like no other

But this *Easter does give us the opportunity to ponder all the gifts God has given us*

*We always ponder the gifts of God on Easter*—but this year it’s been powerfully brought to our consciousness *all the gifts of God that we usually take for granted*

With the economy the way it’s been for the last few years—most of us take for granted our jobs and that we’re going to have an income

We usually take for granted that we can go to the store and get whatever we need—food—paper products—*toilet paper*--**whatever**

We usually take for granted that we can get together with family and friends and enjoy each other’s company

And of course we so often take for granted our health—the fact that most of us can walk and talk, taste and smell, see and hear

As Catholics--we certainly have taken for granted that we can come to the house of the Lord to be in the very presence of our Savior—and that we can participate in that once and for all saving sacrifice of Jesus in the Holy Mass

Now as we watch the daily counts of those who have been infected with COVID-19 –the count throughout the world—in our nation – in our state---///seeing the daily death toll climb

*We have been powerfully reminded of how precious and how precarious life is*

*But today we celebrate*—**no matter what we face in life**—Jesus has won the victory—Jesus has opened the gates of heaven for us—Jesus has transformed humiliation into victory—heartache and pain into triumph--- suffering and death to become the path to eternal life

Today Jesus not only triumphs over the grave---but He assures us that we can now share in His victory

St Paul in our 2nd reading today said, “Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died*, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.* When Christ your life appears, **then you too will appear with him in glory.**

We prayed in the sequence—“For the sheep the lamb has bled…Christ my hope is risen again”

*And He’s our hope* because of His promise that we who have died with Him –will also rise with Him

The fact is He speaks to us today as the angel and He Himself spoke to the two Mary’s in our gospel—Jesus and the angel said, “**Do not be afraid”**

That of course is God’s message to us on this Easter Sunday—Don’t be afraid

Don’t be afraid even in the face of this pandemic—even if you suffer unemployment—even as your life is upended--///Jesus says to us *don’t be afraid because I have won the victory for you*

“Yes you might have to share in My Good Friday—yes you might get sick—yes, you might suffer, yes you might face uncertainty---*but this life is nothing compared to the life I’ve won for you”*

 “This life is temporary—the life to come is eternal”

“In this life there is heartache and pain and loss---in the life to come there will be only joy and glory and peace”

“In this life there is suffering and death---*but in that Jesus says,*  **you share in My suffering and death**—*so that you can share in My triumph”*

Jesus tells us that **everything we face in this life** is an opportunity *to make a greater leap of faith*—an opportunity to surrender our will to His Holy Will—an opportunity to get our hearts off the things of this broken world and set our hearts *on the perfect life* of heaven when we’ll be with Him in glory

Too often my friends—when things are going well here—we can allow ourselves to get so wrapped up in the here and now---that we pay little attention to what life is all about

*This life is about getting to heaven*—no ifs ands or buts about it---**this life is about getting to heaven**

 And everything in this life is an opportunity to grow in our faith

So when things are going well—it’s an opportunity to rejoice in how good God has been to us

An opportunity rejoice in all the blessings He’s showered upon us---and as 21st century Americans we have been given so many incredible blessings

So when things are going well we have the opportunity to have hearts filled with gratitude for all He has given us

*But when things are going bad*---**it’s an even greater opportunity**

Because when things are not going the way we want them to go---*it can raise our minds to the life where everything will be perfect*

It can lead us to let go of our pride where everything has to go our way—and it can lead us to humbly pray—“Lord not will, but Your Will be done”

When things aren’t going like we want them to go it can help us realize how precious and how precarious our lives here are---*and can raise our minds to be grateful for all we do have* –**and can lead us to yearn for life with Him for all eternity**

My friends—on this Easter Sunday—perhaps more than any Easter in our lifetimes—we can truly celebrate all that God has done for us

 Jesus has won the victory so we can share in that victory

Jesus has triumphed over death so that we don’t have to be afraid of death

Jesus endured all that the world threw at Him so that we can endure all that the world throws at us

Jesus says to us, “Do not be afraid”—my friends let’s embrace this good news—and no matter what we might face—let’s set our hearts on sharing in His victory—Amen? Amen