



Easter Sunday Reflection by Fr. John —

Happy Easter! How can I say that with coronavirus, people out of work, the stock market rocking, people sick? Because that's what the Resurrection is all about. It's the basis of Christian hope, it keeps things in perspective, It reminds us that all of our very real and painful setbacks are only temporary.

The Church uses that shorthand expression "the paschal mystery" to refer to that cycle of the suffering, death and Resurrection of Christ. But that cycle wasn't a one-time thing for Jesus or for us. The paschal mystery isn't just about the happy ending in store for us faithful Christians after our earthly death.

Like Jesus, we experience mini-deaths throughout our lives – maybe even every day. But God offers us regular resurrections, like spring following winter. Theologian John Shea says: "What the resurrection teaches us is not how to live, but how to live again, and again, and again!"

The Resurrection shows us that God has the last word. When we feel deprived, or shamed or defeated, or that we've failed, or we're just plain tired, God will give us new life. God will vindicate us.

One of the graces of the Resurrection is that when we truly, deeply believe in it, nothing in life is a threat to us anymore. God will make everything right. That's how Jesus could teach us repeatedly in the Gospels: Do not be afraid. God raises us up from all the mini-deaths we experience throughout our lives. When a door is closed on us, God opens another.

The Resurrection is God's promise to us faithful Christians that our lives will end up well. And not just at the very end. No matter what mistakes we've made or things we've done, we get a fresh start every day, a daily rising from the mini-graves we find ourselves in. So once again I say: Happy Easter! Hold on to the joy that comes from the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[Note from Fr. John: I must give credit for most of my thoughts to their source, from my Lenten reading of The Passion and the Cross by Fr. Ronald Rolheiser. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, Fr. Henri Nouwen and Fr. Ron are three of the greatest writers on Catholic spirituality in America in the latter half of the 20th century. All have great insights on the Resurrection. Let one of them speak to your heart.]

(Picture above from Easter 2019.)