

Easter Sunday

By: Fr. Greg Ames

It seemed too good to be true. For an annual benefit, a charter school in Utah emailed the comedian Jon Stewart, asking him to appear. And he said yes. Can you imagine the excitement? It was going to be a big event; some 900 guests responded to the invitations for the fund raising event. Months of emails back and forth with Jon Stewart confirming date, travel arrangements, time. Ah, but there were little clues which were obscured by excitement of having landed a celebrity, and a big one at that.

They had booked the wrong Jon Stewart. Instead of the host of Comedy Central's Daily Show and the Academy Awards, they had booked Jon A. Stewart, businessman, motivational speaker, and yes, professional wrestler from Chicago. Two weeks before the event someone called the comedian Jon Stewart's publicist in Beverly Hills. Not certain what you are talking about came the response and Jon Stewart is taping a show that night. Mr. Stewart of Chicago-whose appearance was cancelled-indicated this has happened before. That is why, he said, I kept asking them, Are you sure that I am the person you really want?

You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised.

Another Easter morning. And we gather to hear the familiar story of a tomb, a man in dazzling white robes, confused women, frightened disciples and the thrilling message: he has been raised.

Yes, you know the story. It is the central belief of our lives as Christians. On Easter Sunday, we do more than come simply to hear an old story whose ending we all know. No, every Easter Sunday stands before us as a challenge: which Jesus do you want? At Christmas, we think of Jesus as the baby in the manger; throughout the year, we imagine Jesus as the Good Shepherd, the miracle worker, the one who heals people. And that is the real Jesus. On Easter, we proclaim that we want the other part of Jesus. The Jesus who calls us out of our-

selves, challenges our choices and call us to be new people, different people; not just on Easter, but every day. Which Jesus do you want? We want the Jesus who:

LOVES But not the mushy, sentimental, Christianity as a big hug. We want the Jesus who sees in every human person, no matter how lost, messed up, or difficult, a person worthy of love. We are challenged to embrace the Jesus who says every human life has meaning, not because of what they do, but because of who they are: God's child.

FORGIVES the greatest teaching central to his message is that forgiveness is always possible. No one is stuck in the tomb of sin, self hate, doubt, despair. To our great shame, we often keep people in those places. We are challenged that the forgiveness we seek and need is extended to all.

SENDS YOU FORTH Christian faith is not about how you feel, or what you think. A life of faith is when you get it, and you realize "he sends you forth to serve." the women cannot stay at the tomb; that is a dead end. They are told to go forth and find Jesus in the world. This is the challenge Jesus offers to us who claim we are so busy, there is no time. The central work of your life is to be where Jesus is.

An interview with Prince Andrew asked what people would not know about his mother, the Queen of England. He replied that is quite funny. He said she was once walking among the crowds on a visit to Scotland, and someone said to her, You look just like the Queen! She replied, How reassuring.

As we send you forth, on this beautiful Easter morning, we send you forth with a mission. To embrace the life of a Jesus who says every human person is loved, forgiveness is our strongest power, and we will serve. As you go through your life, someone will see you loving, forgiving and serving; reassured that they have indeed seen in you the real Jesus.

READINGS OF THE WEEK

Acts 10:34-43

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

John 20:1-9

April 8, 2012

復活與見證

曾慶導神父

今天讀經一記載的伯多祿的演講，是他得到異象、明瞭天主向他向外邦人傳福音之後，在外邦人科爾乃略家的宣道詞。這宣道可以說是教會首牧伯多祿和他後來一代一代的教會訓導當局向世界傳福音的宣講大綱：天主以聖神和大能傾註在納匝肋人耶穌身上，使祂以言以行宣講天國；祂在十字架上死而復活後，顯現給天主所揀選的見證人，叫他們向萬民講道，證明祂就是所有生者與死者的法官，凡信祂的人，賴祂的名字都要獲得罪赦。伯多祿講道之後，聖神使科爾乃略和他的親人朋友都以基督耶穌之名受洗。這是保祿歸化之前，教會藉由伯多祿向外邦人傳教的第一個例子。

耶穌的復活經常遭到無神的唯理主義者質疑攻擊，然而教會始終堅持耶穌復活是歷史事實，究竟誰對誰錯？信仰復活合理嗎？

復活那一刻雖然沒有用攝影機錄下來（這基本上是唯理主義者所要求的證據），但歷史事實造成的歷史後果，是可以由歷史研究方法證實的——有果必有因。那什麼是耶穌復活的歷史後果呢？有什麼歷史可查考的改變，是歸因於耶穌的復活事件呢？就算是存心否認復活的人都不得不承認，耶穌的門徒在他復活之前和之後有一百八十度的大轉變。還沒有經驗到耶穌復活顯現之前，門徒們都因害怕當時猶太人的「當權者」而躲在屋子裏（若二十 19），或躲到別的地方（見路二十四 13-35），因為「當權者」把他們的老師釘在十字架上了，他們害怕政府要斬草除根，把他們也一網打盡。但在經驗到耶穌死而復活後，他們的害怕一掃而空，不怕坐牢、不怕殺頭，在最高議會裏向所有高官宣揚被他們殺死的耶穌（宗四 1-20，五 17-42），並完全漠視高官們「不准再提耶穌之名」的命令（宗四 18-20），熱忱地四處宣揚死而復活的耶穌就是默西亞。

今天我們讀到的就是伯多祿被審問、關押、鞭打後，立意把復活的喜訊不單傳給猶太人，還要傳給外邦人的舉動。為了宣揚這個復活，他們全都樂意地接受一切困苦，最後還為復活的耶穌拋頭顱，灑熱血。假如耶穌復活是他們編造的謊言，他們怎麼會為自己的謊言受苦捨命呢？假如他們的熱情宣講是由於幻覺造成的激情，鞭打的苦痛早就該把他們叫醒了！所以，他們不辭艱辛到處見證耶穌復活的唯一解釋，就是他們的見證是可信的。而且，他們這些「蟻民」的信仰不到三百年就征服了整個羅馬帝國。耶穌確實復活了！

我們後代的基督徒雖然沒有生在耶穌時代的巴勒斯坦，但我們相信以伯多祿為首的教會的信仰見證，「沒有看見而相信的，更是有福」（若二十 29）。

我們在現代，憑什麼能把這復活的信仰傳給別人？別人怎樣會認為我們是可信賴的而被吸引，好像科爾乃略一家人一樣樂於領洗？憑的是今昔相同的見證：門徒們的改變。這也就是今天讀經二裏，保祿宗徒對哥羅森團體的勸勉：「你們既然與基督一同復活了，就該追求天上的事，你們要思念天上的事，不要思念地上的事。」天上的事就是仁愛、和平、正義，地上的事是指仇恨、鬥爭和邪惡。我們若因信耶穌復活而變成一個愛好仁愛、和平、正義的人，即使受迫害也改變不了我們做這樣的人，那我們對復活耶穌的見證才是真實的、可信服的，別人雖然沒有看到拍攝耶穌復活的那一刻的記錄，也會要求進入我們教會團體的。

今天的福音記錄了初期教會如何獲得了復活的信仰。在這裏，教會中的婦女擔任了重要的角色。作為教會婦女的代表，瑪麗德蓮因著愛耶穌，天還沒亮就到墳墓那裏，是她把空墳的消息報告給教會之首——伯多祿（代表職務性的教會）和耶穌所愛的門徒——若望（代表神恩性的教會）。兩人一起往墳墓跑，若望沒有職務重擔的拖累，所以跑得比較快。但他沒有進入空墳，要等到伯多祿來了，讓伯多祿先進去，「核實」他所見到的一切，才跟著進去；雖然「不明白」復活，但他「相信」了，主耶穌不在了不是因為被偷走。祂頭上的那塊頭巾是「捲著」放的，有條理、有計劃的：耶穌的復活是天主的旨意！

教會在現代世界見證復活的耶穌也和初期教會一樣：有深愛主的婦女的參與、不同神恩的信友的合作，以及訓導當局職務性的領導。讓我們一起來，使所有的人都像科爾乃略一樣得到耶穌復活的喜訊。

摘自「教友生活周刊」