

# Let power of Christ's resurrection transform our lives

As he was being wheeled out of the hospital room for one more test, he said to his wife, "I don't want to die." Despite her tears and prayers, he did die.

Haven't we all been a part of that scene at some time in life? We have cried and prayed for a loved one, and that person still died.

St. Paul was right when he said that, "The last enemy to be defeated is death." Death can make or break our faith.

I know a Jewish man whose beloved grandparents died. His rabbi asked him if he wanted to say the prayers for the dead. The young man asked, "Will that bring them back to life?" The rabbi replied: "No." The young man refused to say the prayers and never went back to synagogue again. I think we all know a lot of Christians who have done the same thing. Why pray? Why go to church? It doesn't do any good!

The only answer to death is life – eternal life! That's why Easter is at the heart of our faith. The same spirit that was in Jesus that raised him from the dead is in us as well! Seeing is not believing. Believing is seeing.

We often have a hard time with the resurrection because we confuse (or at least I confuse) it with a type of resuscitation. We need to remember one important thing: the Jesus that was put in the grave had changed. In other words, it was the same Jesus, but Jesus was not the same!

Mary Magdalen is the most dramatic witness to this. John's Gospel tells us that Jesus loved her! She and Martha and Lazarus were like family to Jesus. And, yet, when she met Jesus in the garden after the resurrection, she didn't recognize him. The Jesus that was buried was like us – mortal, subject to death and all other human limitations. The Jesus that rose was "resurrected," glorified, no longer subject to death, no longer confined to one place at a time. This Jesus was now able to "fill the universe in all its parts."

Death and resurrection is at the heart of our faith. Death and resurrection is at the heart of life. Fittingly, the Saturday after Easter, April 30, there will be the annual workshop for those who have lost loved ones through death, separation or divorce. The conference, sponsored by the Catholic Single Again Council, will be held this year for the first time at beautiful Bon Secours Spiritual Center, 1525 Marriottsville Road in Marriottsville.

As many of us know, the latest Pew Research shows that about one -third of all baptized Catholics have joined other religious faiths. Two major contributing factors are: 1) Marriage outside the Catholic Church to someone of another faith. 2) Re-marriage outside the Catholic Church because of a divorce. Over the years this conference has helped thousands of Catholics to feel supported by their church, and has helped many people of other religious denominations to feel welcomed by the Catholic Church. Pain doesn't know about denominational differences. Love transcends all differences.

Brother Loughlan Sofield , a Missionary Servant of the Most Holy Trinity, will give the keynote address, "Be All You Can Be," and will later give a workshop on "Anger - A Blessed Energy." Jean Neville and Bryan Stringer will give a workshop titled, "Shell Shocked" about navigating the early days after the loss of someone. Katherine Snyder will give a workshop on Hope-Inspired Relationships - having good relationships through good communication. Jack M. Long Ph.D., And Barbara Shue LCSW-C, will present a workshop titled "O.M.G.! It's Happening Again - focusing on how relationships can go right or wrong. Steve and Marge DeFino will have a panel discussion on Exploring Remarriage. I will be there as well, giving a workshop in the morning, and celebrating the closing Mass.

Please come to this day. Please tell others about this day. As the hymn says: "All are welcome, all are welcome in this place!"

The resurrection of Jesus is the source and the summit of our faith. As St. Paul said, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is in vain. ... But Christ has been raised." Let's allow the power of Christ's resurrection to transform our lives. Let's surrender our unbelief to belief, let's surrender our fears to love. Let's stop focusing on the grave and focus on glory. Christ didn't stay in the tomb. We don't have to stay there

either.

*For additional information, call Myra at 410-302-0754, or check the Web -  
<https://bonsecoursspiritualcenter.org/redesign/directions.html>*