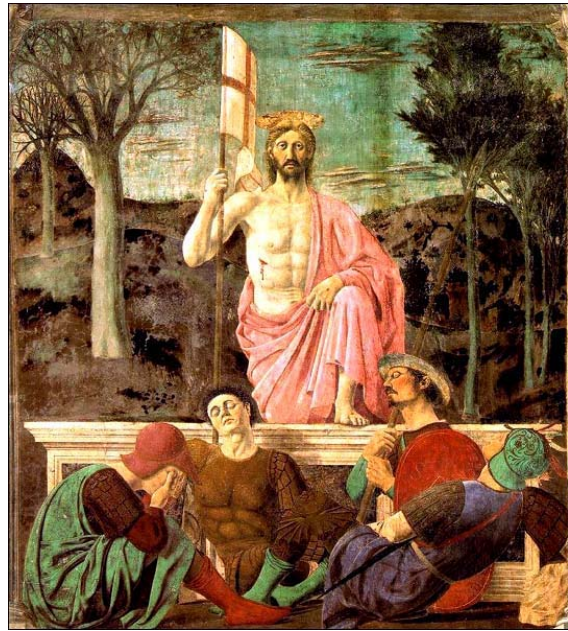


Easter, 2008

“Christ our Pasch is sacrificed. Therefore let us feast ... with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”
(1 Corinthians 5:7)

Lent has been a time of rebirth and renewal. The word itself is short for *Lenten*, which comes from the Old English word *lencten* meaning “spring”. Now the season has come to its completion as we celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord.

Shortly after my ordination 1946, I met a renowned preacher of parish missions, the Redemptorist Fr Slattery. When he learned that I was a Holy Ghost father, he exclaimed: “Ah! Father Edward Leen, the Newman of Ireland!” Fr Leen was a great master of spirituality, and during Passiontide this year, I returned to his book *Why the Cross?* written in 1938. In the introduction we read:



Christianity has not failed for the simple reason that it has not been tried. It certainly has not been tried on any extensive scale. It could be branded with failure if, having been guaranteed by its Founder to be able to achieve certain definite results, it had been, when put to the test, found wanting. But if Christianity is but imperfectly or incompletely applied to the task of reducing to order the confused issues of human existence, it cannot be blamed for the relative chaos which results. If Christianity in its integrity was accepted by all; if it were put into practice for one entire day by all men throughout the whole world, then for that day the woes which afflict mankind would in great part have ceased. [Christianity does not guarantee that it would put an end to distresses inherent to mortality and the fallen state omen] but the earth would bear a not too remote resemblance to the Garden of Paradise.

To dream of bringing about this happy state of affairs without applying the principles of Christianity to the unravelling of the tangled issues of human existence, is to dream a dream that can never be realised. Many of the world's rulers of the day indulge this idle dream. It is not astonishing that the result of the political efforts of such dreamers is but to intensify the existing disorder and to make confusion worse confounded.

The seemingly endless troubled situation that we see about us in the world today – terrorism, scattered wars, persecution and oppression of peoples – is the continuing

effect of the great schism of the 16th century and the Reformation which was spread like a plague through the varied political scheming for power and world domination of precious mineral wealth and finance. And we can see most clearly that the missing ingredient is “the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth”. And what action does Christianity advise? “Do not put your trust in men or in Princes,” and again, “For you must be purified by obedience to the truth so that God’s love may grow in you and overflow to the brethren.” And so it is good always to pray to our Blessed Mother and ask her to obtain for us that purity of soul and body which leads to the perfect love of God. Our purification comes according to our obedience to the truth, an obedience that must be total and without reservations. Remember Pilate asked our Lord: “What is truth?” And Jesus replied: “For this was I born, for this came I into the world to bear testimony to the truth.” The Son of God became man to show us the truth; and did He not say to us: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” We must follow Jesus along the road that has been laid out for each one of us; each of us was created by God for a purpose, and it is that purpose which we must fulfil; it is only through Him, who is the way, with Him who is the Truth and in Him who is the life eternal that we can attain that purification by which we fulfil our purpose on this earth and receive the reward destined for us.

To quote Fr Edward Leen again:

The Saints accepted Christianity whole-heartedly. In their case there was no failure. They became exactly what Christianity guaranteed to make them, supermen in the highest sense of the term. They became transfigured with a transfiguration symbolised by that of Christ on the Mount. They became human beings — more human than the others, and yet human beings who diffused rays of divinity. They are people who have permanently benefited mankind. Their spirit and their works survive them and serve as an enduring leaven in the mass of humanity ... They were eminently great, and Christianity was the source of their greatness.

I would add also that their greatness came by being purified by total obedience to Christ who is Truth itself.

With the feast of our Lord's rising from the dead, we call upon our Lady as Queen of Heaven. She is the only one who shares full body and soul in the glorious resurrection of her divine Son. In her visitations to us on this earth, no words can adequately describe, no artist – even the greatest – can depict the beauty and glory of our heavenly Queen. Remember, when her Son sent her from heaven to visit us on this earth it was not a ghostly vision, it was an apparition of Mary glorified body and soul — perfectly reflecting the risen glory of Christ Himself. Let us then turn humbly to Mary Co-Redemptrix, who remains still the handmaid of the Lord, and ask her to obtain for us that grace of obedience to the truth which by the way of the Cross leads to victory over sin and death.