

Third Sunday of Easter
17th/18th April 2021, Sooeey

“Look at my hands and feet; Yes, it is I indeed”.

The great promoter of positive thinking, Rev. Norman Vincent Peale who died at the age of 95, in the year 1993, believed that one of the most wonderful principles known to man is called the “miracle principle”. Six words describe the principle: *Expect a miracle – make miracles happen.*

According to Peale, if you keep your eyes open expectantly every day for great and wonderful things to happen, great and wonderful things will tend to happen to you. If one expects great things from God, one will receive great things from God. How then, can someone go about expecting miracles and causing miracles to happen? According to Rev. Peale, the number one thing is to have a tremendous Faith, a deep Faith – a Faith that is so positively strong that it rises above doubt. He asserts that if we train

ourselves to have faith in depth, it will release an astonishing power in our life to produce miracles.

Well, the disciples of Jesus who were devastated by the event of their Lord's passion and death were similarly troubled with doubts, fears and despair. An Easter apparition was necessary to assure them of the reality of a stupendous miracle: The Lord's Resurrection. To the frightened and troubled disciples who were incredulous of the beautiful reality of the "miracle", the Risen Christ revealed Himself anew, opening their minds and hearts, instructing them about the Paschal event of His death and Resurrection, and its implications in their life as Easter witnesses.

Risen is a 2016 American [biblical drama film](#) directed by [Kevin Reynolds](#). I remember seeing this movie sometime back, a movie which I felt is robustly Christian. The scene that stays in my mind most is one in which Clavius the Roman Tribune, a fictional character, played by Joseph Fiennes (*fains*) looking for

the disciples of Jesus. And he reaches the place and goes to the upper room. He bursts in, with his Roman sword and he looks around the room. He sees the disciples and then he sees Jesus. It was so disconcerting for Clavius because he had presided at the Crucifixion. And there he had seen Jesus when He was dying, or rather when He had just died. And he had carefully examined His face at that time, and so he knew him. And now, he sees this figure alive in the room and so his reaction is like ours because as we watch the scene we are not sure either: “Oh! Is that Jesus with His disciples”. Yes! Clavius is a kind of confused. He in a way slides down the wall in a mixture of amazement, of confusion, of fascination – all at once; because in human terms it is not something possible. Dead people don’t come back to life. If someone dies, that’s it. It is over.

And now, to see Jesus alive in the flesh must have been uplifting for those who saw the Risen Lord, ‘for the disciples’, but at the same time, confusing and alarming. Yes! They worshipped Jesus, but some doubted. They had breakfast with the Risen Lord, and some of them did doubt it was the Lord. He appeared to them and greeted them: “Peace be with you!” But they thought they were seeing a ghost. Yes! There was

something which was unnerving about the experience of seeing the Risen Jesus in His flesh.

And yet dear friends, Resurrection had necessarily to do with the flesh. It is an embodied event. And it would be impossible to explain the emergence of Christianity without the bodily resurrection.

Well, we are still in the Easter season. Two weeks ago we celebrated the feast of Easter, the most important feast for us Christians. St. Paul reminds us: “If Christ is not risen from the dead, we are the most foolish of all people”. And we celebrate Easter not just on one day, but during a period of about 7 weeks, and the Easter season climaxes with the feast of Pentecost.

And during this season we have the readings of different apparitions of the Risen Jesus to the apostles, to the disciples. And every reading gives us a specific dimension of this mystery, “Easter”, of the Risen Jesus.

In the Gospel today, we have first of all Jesus inviting the disciples “to see”, to touch Him, to assure them that He is alive. Then He adds these following words: “See how it is written that the Christ should suffer, rise from the dead and repentance be preached in His name”.

Dear friends, this sentence alone gives us the whole salvation history, ‘the three dimensions’: “Prophecy,

actualization and belief”. Whatever happened to Jesus was foretold by the prophets centuries earlier. And Jesus underwent the passion, death and Resurrection, and He appears to them inviting them to believe.

The Resurrection is an absolute mystery. In simple words, Jesus is alive. If only during this Easter season we can deepen this awareness, this belief that Jesus is risen, our lives will be transformed.

As we continue the Eucharist, let us pray for this grace to learn to believe, not just merely in dogmas or in intellectual concepts, but to go beyond and believe that Jesus is alive, Jesus is with us. And may this belief transform our lives to experience the new life that Jesus gives to each one of us.

God bless you all! **Amen.**