

Homily Easter Sunday 2026

'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, there they will see me.'

Last Saturday I sat mesmerised, my heart bursting with joy, in front of our new 9-day old grandson Francis. I hadn't realised how much time had passed until my wife, Alice, said that I had sat for over an hour, motionless, totally focussed on little Francis. What joy, what beauty, what a miracle, the birth of a baby.

As I reflected, in preparation for this homily, on the Sacred Liturgy of The Word for Easter Day I began to appreciate the even greater joy, offered by The Risen Christ. If you run selected phrases together from the Easter Readings, you will soon sense the sheer JOY of the events of Easter Day, 'The Lord has led you into a land flowing with milk and honey, let us all exult and rejoice. This Jesus, God raised up and so my heart rejoices, my soul be glad at the fullness of joy in his presence. Christ, my hope, has risen, let us rejoice and be glad. Alleluia.'

The above phrases from Acts of The Apostles, The Easter Sequence and today's Gospel seem to capture beautifully the awe and wonder, not only of The Resurrection of Jesus which we RELIVE HERE AND NOW but also capture the joy of the miracle of new life. What joy, what beauty, what a miracle did the 'women' experience at the empty tomb as they realised, 'He is risen!'

No event in the history of humankind has had such an impact on the world as Jesus rising from the dead. More books have been written, more masterpieces painted, more music scripts composed and more films produced on the life, death and resurrection of Christ than any other event in history. Their message is simple, 'Jesus is risen and he has destroyed sin and death forever.' What joy, what beauty, what a miracle we too experience TODAY at the empty tomb.

Frank Morrison, a sceptic of The Resurrection, set out in 1930 to destroy the myth of Christ's rising from the dead. In his classic book 'Who Moved The Stone, still in print today, Morrison sets out to consider the 'questionable' case for The Resurrection based on evidence of The Gospels. As he ploughed through The Passion and Resurrection Narratives he began to realise that, based on the evidence before him, he must instead accept Jesus' Resurrection as true beyond all reasonable doubt. A sceptic turned believer by meticulous analysis of the facts before him. What joy, what beauty, what a miracle!

Today, our world is fragile and in parts even broken. Climate change and war appear to be strangling our ailing planet. It is however, into this world that The Risen Christ enters throwing off the shackles of hopelessness, darkness and despair and proclaiming a message of PEACE, JOY, LIGHT and HOPE. We too should sit for hours on Easter Sunday contemplating this beautiful reality, our hearts bursting with JOY. How stunningly beautiful!