

LIVERPOOL ARCHDIOCESAN CENTRE FOR EVANGELISATION

From the Press Officer:

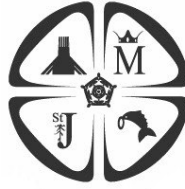
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Introduction to Mass and Homily preached by the Most Reverend Patrick Kelly, Archbishop of Liverpool, at Solemn Mass of Easter Day. Sunday 23 March 2008 at 10.00 am in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, Liverpool. Mass televised by BBC 1.

Introduction to Mass:

Peace be with you. That was the word of the Lord Jesus, risen from the dead to the apostles who had deserted, denied, doubted him. It is as successor to those forgiven, reconciled sinners that I must speak them today. It is the word of a Lord whose sign is not a blazing furnace of power and spectacle but a candle's gentle ray of patience, mercy, forgiveness. It is for that victory over the forces of domination, control, barbarity, arrogance, the choir now in our name give thanks and praise.

Homily:

For more than thirty years I have been privileged to accompany our sisters and brothers who are deaf in their life as disciples of our Lord. Four weeks ago their faces shone with joy. In minutes the message spread across the world: 'Today Pope Benedict greeted deaf pilgrims from Poland using sign language.' So often isolated the sign shone out in Mexico, in the United States, in Australia, for my friends in Liverpool: in your silent world, isolated world, you are not alone: you are one with all the disciples of Jesus.

And on Easter Day we need our deaf sisters and brothers. I say this because slowly I have learnt: to call these sisters and brothers deaf is only a glimpse of the truth. It is nearer the truth to say: they are not deaf people but eye people: they look, watch, notice, see. And this is their feast, their day.

Mary saw the stone rolled away: as we heard Mary sing: I saw the tomb of the living Christ: I saw the angel witnesses: I saw the shroud and clothes of the grave. John saw the linen cloths discarded because needed no more; Simon Peter saw the cloths and the veil that had shrouded his face: discarded without ceremony, as if in haste: useless: for the one who can die no more.

And, as you will remember at the end of this Mass when we join tens of thousands of pilgrims in Rome: Simon Peter in a circus close to a hill called Vatican would be crucified, an old, old man, rather than deny what he had seen on that first Easter Day.

And what is certain about Jesus is the promise given to all: for, as we shall soon proclaim, we believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

So above all today our praise must be earthy: glorious glass: candle: flower: garden: song: organ: drum: trumpet: vestment: banner: and above all bread and wine: what earth has given and human hands have made changed this day by the overshadowing Holy Spirit into the living body, the life-giving blood of our glorious risen Lord: among us in lowly signs: force, control, fetters have been conquered and we have been set free as light-hearted and creative as children.

That freedom we now proclaim by renewing those promises, that echo the day when in the waters of baptism we were born again to become children of God. a yes to life; a yes to life fittingly spelt out by Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor and Cardinal Keith O'Brien this Easter; a yes to the Holy Spirit in our hearts; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

Ends
23 March 2008