

Mar. 31, Apr. 1, 2018

Thoughts from the pastor,

This weekend we celebrate Easter and also have April Fools Day. The origin of April Fools Day is unknown but we should know all about the first Easter. Having them on the same day is a great time to do some extra thinking about what our world would be like if Jesus hadn't risen.

It is hard enough to convince some people that there is a life after death without all the direct and indirect information we have on Jesus' resurrection. There are still so many who refuse to believe. One of the best and easiest books I have ever read on the subject is "The Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel. As an atheist who was fed up with the foolishness of Christians he went about trying to prove that we were all fools. As a journalist who reported on many court cases he looked at it like a judge and jury would have to look at proving a crime did or didn't happen in the past. Since we can't see into the past courts have to look at whatever evidence is available and make a decision. They don't just look at direct evidence like a smoking gun but also look for other factors like the character of each of the different witnesses. They want to know how to understand their reliability. After realizing the change in the apostles and their willingness to die for this faith in the resurrection, he became a Christian.

What I suggest that you might do on your own, or with your family, would be to think about how your life would be different if you didn't believe in the resurrection. Without the resurrection it would be doubtful that there really is an afterlife. If there is no afterlife it would be doubtful that God exists. Without the resurrection we would be far more skeptical of people around us who have had near death experiences, or experienced God in their lives. You would be like many people in our world who simply don't believe in miracles, simply because they have nothing to hang that kind of experience on. As Christians we base those beliefs on one major belief; that Jesus is alive and has appeared to his apostles.

If the resurrection hadn't happened, how would you handle tragedy? How would you face sickness and death? How would you spend your time differently? What would you place your hope in? What would you see as the purpose of life? One thing I know is that we wouldn't be getting together on Easter and we wouldn't be preparing for 1st Communions or Confirmations. Soccer and other sports would probably become even more important if there were no Son of God to ask us to follow Him. Dealing with life and death would be totally different. Safety would be up for grabs. Some people might take far more risks because they have nothing to live for except excitement. Others would be trying to make everything as safe as possible so there would be little chance of dying. They would be doing everything in their power to find a way to achieve eternal life on earth. They would be desperately looking for medical breakthroughs like gene therapy or cloning.

In other words you don't have to think too hard to see the difference between the seeing the world through the eyes of one who celebrates Easter or lives like it is a giant April Fools Day gag. They are all around us and many of us can't decide so we place bets on both ways. Maybe it is a good thing that this year we celebrate both in one day. It might make us think. Have a great Easter.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank