

# FAITH AND REASON

**The Risen Lord:** On that first Easter Day Pontius Pilate must have thought he had made a new beginning. The latest revolutionary had been dispensed with. An example had been made of him; his crucifixion had been carried out without incident. The religious leaders had disowned him. The people clamored for his blood. It appeared as if this stubborn, rebellious people were finally beginning to adopt the Roman point of view.

What if Pilate should go down in history as the man who ushered in a new era in Roman-Jewish relationships? And King Herod also, by the mere fact that he recognized Pilate's jurisdiction in the matter? The next dispatch to Rome, in all probability described the new atmosphere that had been created in that highly volatile and troublesome corner of the world. The impression of Pilate was entirely incorrect. He was recalled to Rome, rather quickly in extreme unpopularity. Within a generation, the city of Jerusalem, the seat of Herod's kingdom, was destroyed in circumstances of indescribable horror.

The reaction of Jesus' friends to his resurrection was not, at first, that any earth-moving change had occurred, but rather, that everything was, and was going to be, just as it was before Jesus met Mary Magdalene in the garden... He walked with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.... He met with as many as 500 disciples on one occasion... He met with the Apostles in the Upper Room on two occasions... He met some of the Apostles at the Sea of Galilee and had breakfast with them.

After the Ascension they were to wait for Jesus in Galilee. They occupy their time by going back to their old craft - fishing, as if they had never left their nets. Everything is the same, it is just as if the crucifixion had never taken place. How could one forget Judas betraying Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.... Peter's triple denial of Jesus "I do not know the man" ... And as for the rest, they took refuge in silence... John, alone, the teenager, was faithful to the end.

Let us look at the other side of life Ludvig Feuerbach (1830) sometimes called the father of the anti-God movement popularized such ideas such as the burning point in history will be when man becomes aware that the only god of man is man himself. Karl Marx (1848) wrote the Communist Manifesto partly on the basis of a draft prepared by his friend Frederick Engels. Religion, he said, is the opium of the people. Both men were in their late twenties at the time and were influenced by Feuerbach. August Comte (1851) said "The great revolution of the West proclaims and at the same time ensures the hopeless effete-ness of the reign of God. "God is unquestionably gone forever. "Emile Soisset (1855) said, "Herr Feuerbach offer Christian Europe a new God to worship, the human race." Imagine! Friedrich Nietzsche (1888) said "God is dead, It is we who have killed him, we are the assassins of God. We are at war with the Christian ideal against the doctrine which make Beatitudes and salvation the aim of life. Adolf Hitler idolized Nietzsche and became his iron fist. Stalin made a god of Marx and Lenin and his murderous climb to power shaped the world's first atheistic state. Two world wars.... massacres... slave labor camps.... Holocausts... all the legacy of atheist dreams.

"Atheistic Humanism was bound to end in bankruptcy - if man makes himself as a god, he may for a time cherish the illusion that he has freed himself, but it is a fleeting exaltation. In reality, he has merely abused God and it is not long before he abuses himself" The Drama of Modern Atheism...Fr Henri De Lubac

The secular humanist seeks to exalt man by placing him at the center, lord and master of a universe he did not create. The Christian humanists' places Christ at the center of the universe. "The still point of the turning earth" T S Eliot. By so doing he places men there also. And how is that you may ask? "All is ours, you are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (I Cor 3) "Your life is caught up with Christ in God". Redeemed man belongs at the center of the universe with Christ, whose life and mission he now shares, in the work of creation and in the work of redemption.

The following reflection is a painful reminder of what man does when he walks away from God. "I made a mistake. Without doubt an oppressed multitude had to be liberated. But our method only provoked oppressions and atrocious massacres. My living nightmare is to find myself lost in an ocean red with blood of innumerable victims. It is too late not to alter the past. But what was needed to save Russia were ten Francis of Assisi." Frederick Engels, one of the fathers of Communism (Letters on Modern Atheism by Fr Henri De Lubac). In this world it cannot be a matter of man or God! "The glory of God is man fully alive" (St Irenaeus 130-220 a. d.) We must learn once again the meaning of the words... "You shall walk with your God" .... **Fr. William C. Mooney**

**It is only right, with all the powers of our heart and mind, to praise You Father and Your Only Begotten Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Dear Father, by Your wondrous condescension of Loving-Kindness toward us, Your servants, You gave up Your Son. Dear Jesus You paid the debt of Adam for us to the Eternal Father by Your Blood poured forth in Loving-Kindness. You cleared away the darkness of sin by Your magnificent and radiant Resurrection. You broke the bonds of death and rose from the grave as a Conqueror. You reconciled Heaven and earth. Our life had no hope of Eternal Happiness before You redeemed us. Your Resurrection has washed away our sins, restored our innocence and brought us joy. How inestimable is the tenderness of Your Love! **Saint Gregory's Easter Prayer**

**Christ is Risen:** The world below lies desolate. Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen. Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing. Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty. Christ is Risen indeed from the dead, the first of the sleepers, Glory and power are his forever and ever.

**At Easter, God finally reveals His glory:** He takes away the last veil and astonishes us as never before. We discover, in fact, that God's glory is all love: pure love, mad and unthinkable, beyond every limit and measure... True glory is the glory of love, because it is the only one that gives life to the world. Certainly this glory is the opposite of worldly glory, which comes when one is admired, praised, acclaimed. The glory of God, on the other hand, is paradoxical: no applause, no audience. At the center there is not the ego, but the other... **Pope Francis, Angelus, April 2019**

#### **A Thought For the Day**

**Sunday** Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song.  
**Monday** Easter is the demonstration of God that life is essentially spiritual and timeless.  
**Tuesday** Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was.  
**Wednesday** Crosses release us from this world and by doing so bind us to God.  
**Thursday** Where flowers bloom, so does hope.  
**Friday** God is love and he has defeated evil.  
**Saturday** Blessed are those who have not seen and have yet believed.

**What does Jesus Christ do in the Eucharist?** It is God, who, as our savior, offers himself each day for us to his Father's justice. If you are in difficulties and sorrows, he will comfort and relieve you. If you are sick, he will either cure you or give you strength to suffer so as to merit Heaven. If the devil, the world, and the flesh are making war on you, he will give you the weapons with which to fight, to resist, and to win victory. If you are poor, he will enrich you with all sorts of riches for time and eternity. Let us open the door to his sacred and adorable Heart and be wrapped about for an instant by the flames of his love, and we shall see what a God who loves us can do. O my God, who shall be able to comprehend? **St. John Vianney**

**A Prayer for Peace:** Lord Jesus Christ, You are the true King of peace. In You alone is found freedom. Please free our world from conflict. Bring unity to troubled nations. Let Your glorious peace reign in every heart. Dispel all darkness and evil. Protect the dignity of every human life. Replace hatred with Your love. Give wisdom to world leaders. Free them from selfish ambition. Eliminate all violence and war. Glorious Virgin Mary, Saint Michael the Archangel, Every angel and saint: Please pray for peace. Pray for unity amongst nations. Pray for unity amongst all people. Pray for the most vulnerable. Pray for those suffering. Pray for the fearful. Pray for those most in need. Pray for us all. Jesus, Son of the Living God, have mercy on us. Jesus, hear our prayers. Jesus, I trust in You! **Amen.**

**The Power of Beauty:** The beautiful is knowledge certainly, but, in a superior form, since it arouses man to the real greatness of the truth. True knowledge is being struck by the arrow of beauty that wounds man, moved by reality. Being struck and overcome by the beauty of Christ is a more real, more profound knowledge than mere rational deduction. The encounter with the beautiful can become the wound of the arrow that strikes the heart and in this way opens our eyes, so that later, from this experience, we take the criteria for judgment and can correctly evaluate the arguments. The experience of the beautiful has received new depth and new realism. The One who is the beauty itself let himself be slapped in the face, spat upon, crowned with thorns. Whoever has perceived this beauty knows that truth and not falsehood, is the real aspiration of the world. It is not the false that is "true", but indeed, the truth. Is there anyone who does not know Dostoyevsky's often-quoted sentence: "The beautiful will save us"? However, people usually forget that Dostoyevsky is referring here to the redeeming beauty of Christ must learn to see him. If we know him, not only in words, but if we are struck by the arrow of his paradoxical beauty, then we will truly know him, and know him not only because we have heard others speak about him. Then we will have found the beauty of truth, the truth that redeems. Nothing can bring us into close contact with the beauty of Christ himself other than the world of beauty created by faith and light that shines out from the faces of the saints, through whom his own light became visible.... **Pope Benedict XVI**

**In His Will is Our Peace**  
**Fr. William C. Mooney**

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