

**Homily for April 11, 2004  
Easter 2004, C Cycle**

**By Father Charles Bowes**

**Acts 10:34, 37-42  
1 Corinthians 5:6-8  
John 20:1-9; Luke 24:1-12**

## *The Resurrection of Jesus is as available as the surrender it invites.*

In one family, it is a Good Friday. A job has been lost, a career derailed. A serious illness has been diagnosed. A once-loving relationship has unraveled.

But the other members of the family put aside their own lives and come together at the foot of their loved one's cross. Their love moves whatever mountain necessary, changes the course of whatever river is in their way. Together, Mom and Dad and Sister and Brother bear one another's crosses to bring hope, healing, forgiveness – and resurrection – to every aspect of their life together as a family. The love of our families transforms every tragic and desperate Good Friday into Easter hope.

In this classroom, it is a Good Friday. The numbers and diagrams in the algebra text are a maze to the junior. She is lost and frustrated and discouraged and wants to quit. A tired, overworked teacher just wants to go home after a long week. But, seeing her student's frustration, she takes off her coat, puts down her pile of books and papers, and patiently walks through the problems with the befuddled student. After a lot of hard work and patience, the "lights come on." A teacher's selfless caring and generous gift of time transform this student's Good Friday into Easter light.

At the office, it is a Good Friday. A single mother has lost all of her accrued vacation and leave time to care for her seriously ill child. She is about to lose her job – and the important medical benefits critical to her family's survival. Her coworkers devise a plan to pool some of their vacation time and cover her responsibilities so that she can keep her job and benefits while caring for her son. A Good Friday of desperation is transformed into an Easter of possibility.

We sometimes find ourselves stuck in a Good Friday world – our problems batter us, overwhelm us, strain our ability to cope and make it all work. Our Alleluias are tempered by reality. We approach this Easter Day with, "Christ is risen, BUT...". But in raising his son from the dead, God vindicates the Gospel of his Christ: that good conquers evil, that love transforms hatred, that light shatters the darkness. The story of Jesus does not end in the cold hopelessness of the cross, but reaches ultimate fulfillment in the Resurrection. Easter invites us to surrender, to yield as Jesus did, not with our power, not with our meager strength, but with a power and a strength born of God.

The Lord Jesus in his leaving returns in the power of the Spirit – a Spirit available to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in faith and surrender

and trust – but even the call and the surrender and the trust are God's doing, God's providing. And the outcome is for us as for Jesus, something altogether new – something not of our making and not of our choosing, but of God, of God's life shared without reserve. It is that life we see in the darkness of Holy Saturday. It is that life we see in the light of Easter morning. It is that life of the risen Jesus that transforms the Good Fridays of our lives into Easter. A Blessed Easter to you and to all you love.

The Resurrection of Jesus is as available as the surrender it invites.