

Know Resurrection Know Renewal

By Rev. Perry Cooper

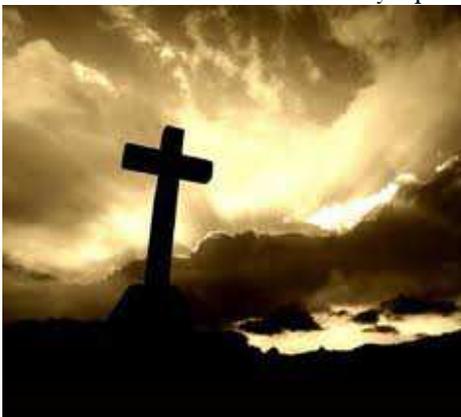
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As I write this article, Archbishop Justin Welby is in conversation with Pope Francis, as well as leaders of the Eastern Orthodox Church. They work towards a common goal of setting a fixed date for Easter. The Eastern Church follows a different liturgical calendar than the Western church. The last time the church seriously took a look at this was in the tenth century. I am very encouraged by this act of collaboration, not so much because of what the end result might be, but rather because this deliberate show of unity sends a message to the church: belief in the power of Easter and the resurrection can bring world leaders together.

A basic tenet Christianity is belief in the bodily Resurrection of Jesus. It is non-negotiable. And we know that without the resurrection, there can be no ascension, and without ascension, there can be no Pentecost, and if there is no Pentecost then the church is dead, even worse than dead - a fraud. And if the church is a fraud, our faith is for nothing. St. Paul writes, *“But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.”* (1Cor. 15:13-14 NIV)

Like snow on a mountain peak, which melts in the spring, bringing life-giving water to the meadows and valleys below, the Resurrection of Jesus is the apex of our faith, from which all spiritual benediction and grace flows. Without the Resurrection, there is nothing.

How tragic is it for those who have not heard of the resurrection of Jesus, or who have heard but have not put their trust in the Risen Christ. For those who believe in the resurrection, there is much gained: there is life, there is hope, there is salvation and there is power! St. Paul declares, *“I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead.”* (Phil. 3:10 NLT) This mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead was no less than the Holy Spirit: *“The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.”* (Rom. 8:11 NLT)



The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, who destroyed the power of sin and death, lives within those who believe in the risen Christ. With the indwelling presence of the Spirit of God we can grow into the fullness of Christ, to be light and salt in our world, and be equipped to move in the gifts of the Spirit the same as those in the New

Testament church.

As we celebrate Easter, may we be reminded that the Resurrection represents a new beginning. From the place of the empty tomb we share in Jesus' victory over sin and death. Eternal life, which was won for us on the cross, is available free of charge through accepting Jesus as risen Lord and Saviour. And with acceptance of the risen Christ, we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, brings renewal to the individual and revival to the land. I, with the rest of the ARM board, continue to pray for renewal and revival. Please continue to pray with us so that the Spirit of God may move, and the name of Jesus be glorified.

Rev. Perry Cooper is a member of the ARM Board and Executive Officer of the Diocese of Central Newfoundland.