

## *The feast of the Risen One and the risen*



by Bro FRANCESCO DILEO OFMCap

**E**aster is not the feast of the Risen One or, to be more precise, it is not just the feast of the Risen One, but the feast of the risen, in the plural. This unique mystery of our salvation that originates from the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, involves us as His mystical body.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains: "Christ's death is at the same time the Paschal sacrifice that accomplishes the definitive redemption of men... But because in His incarnate divine person He has in some way united Himself to every man, the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery is offered to all men. He calls His disciples to take up their cross and follow Him, for Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example so that we should follow in His steps. In fact Jesus desires to associate with His redeeming sacrifice those who were to be its first beneficiaries" (CCC. 613-618).

And not because the Immolated Lamb needs, today as yesterday, a Cyrenean to help Him to carry on the way to Calvary the immense weight of the cross caused by all men's sins, but because we must see in the Cyrenean the example

and role model whom all are called to follow – that is all those who wish to be truly Christian and not just in name. An example that signifies an aspiring to share, always more fully, in the divine nature, never forgetting that "God is charity" (1 Jn 4,16). Saint Paul understood this very well when he wrote to the Colossians: "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for His body, which is the Church" (Col 1, 24).

The Bishop of Piazza Armerina, Mario Sturzo, he too understood this very well. Writing to his more famous brother Don Luigi, a founding father of the Italian Christian Democrat political party, exiled in London, he reminded him: "We are called to follow Our Lord on Tabor rather than Calvary, aren't we? And yet the truth is that we reach Tabor only through the way of Calvary." So the liturgies that we celebrate and participate in again every year at the end of Lent, must be more than a mere remembrance of a historical event or worse, if faith is lacking, of a simple legend. We must genuinely take part in these celebrations so that the grace we received in the sacra-

ment of Baptism may be renewed and so dying with Christ from a life of sin, we may rise up and live together with Him in a new life of love. This is why our fellow friar Saint Padre Pio exhorted: "since Jesus Christ has risen immortal to the life of glory, we too, in the words of St. Paul, must rise up immortal to the life of grace, with the firm proposal to never again fall into sin that causes the spiritual death of our soul" (Letters IV). Let us, then, prepare ourselves to live Easter spiritually united to the Man of Suffering, and to accept full of faith the small and large crosses that will inevitably emerge along our path in this world and overcoming those base instincts of our creaturely nature, so that we may be united to Him in everlasting happiness.

May the risen Lord through the intercession of our fellow friar saint, who followed Him in the way of the cross to share with Him the suffering and the very wounds of His Passion, assist us to embrace this great mystery, to benefit from it spiritually, and enable us to be reborn "immortal in the life of grace."

**A very happy and holy Easter to all!**



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