



Lent Focus Fr Barron reflects

Truly Risen from the Dead

When we recite the Creed, we don't say a word about Jesus' teaching, but we do profess that Jesus was "crucified under Pontius Pilate." He did not simply die; he was put to death, precisely as a political criminal.

He was killed on a Roman instrument of torture--overwhelmed, it seemed, by the hatred, violence, and dysfunction of the sinful world.

In that case, why don't we see Jesus simply as another in a long line of tragic heroes, raging in vain against the powers of the world? Because, as the Creed puts it, "on the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the scriptures."

Throughout much of the period after the Second Vatican Council, too many theologians, teachers, and preachers have tended to downplay the reality of the Resurrection, turning it into a vague symbol or an expression of the faith of the disciples. But if this is all the Resurrection means, then forget it!

Anglican bishop and New Testament scholar N.T. Wright has commented incisively that if Jesus had not been raised

bodily from the dead, Christianity would never have survived as a messianic movement. Wright says that the clearest indication, to a first-century Jew, that someone was not the Messiah would be his death at the hands of the enemies of Israel. That the church of Christ endured as a messianic religion is possible only on the assumption that the crucified one was, nevertheless, objectively alive. Claims that the disciples were inspired by a dead man would never have stood up against the early critics of Christianity.

Truly risen from the dead, victorious over sin and violence, Jesus is now the Lord--the one to whom we owe total allegiance, the one who should become the dominant force in every aspect of our lives.