

# THE BACK OF THE BULLETIN

## This Is The Day

Life doesn't go on in a featureless porridge of similarity. It is, in the words of an old hymn, *new every morning*. This is true of everything that really matters; in any case, the things that *appear* to stay the same don't. Even things like Australian wine vary minutely, and human beings, all living nature, and the great cosmos about us are all glittering, shattering, re-forming, and exploding like a firework-display.

### We're Alive!

I suppose that sums it up: we're alive, and so this moment is unique. This makes us reflect that, if all moments are unique, then there must be some that excel, that matter, more than others: that there must be one moment that is supreme. If you had to choose yours, what would it be? You could settle down for a long time to think about that; but with whom could you *discuss* such a question? Only with someone who had intimately shared *the whole journey*. You could, I believe, find no human being who would qualify. No-one knows the truth about the recesses of another person's life; we are ourselves influenced by experiences too deep to be consciously remembered. Maybe there are some dominant images and memories in us that we could not disclose to any other human being. But, St Paul says, *the Spirit explores the depths of all things, and even the depths of God*. The Spirit, then, must be our guide to the heart of our life, the core of our meaning.

### The Paschal Feast

I don't think life is based on solitary experience, but on the experience of relationship. That may seem obvious, but it isn't universally accepted, and the appeal to selfishness is lining a lot of pockets today. Still, supreme moments seem to demand supreme relationships: we live most deeply together, receiving the gift of life at other's hands. Now, Easter is the supreme moment of Jesus of Nazareth, and Jesus is of all people the One Who Is For Us. He is the great sharer with us, the great founder of community, the ultimate relative, the absolutely intimate Other One. We owe it to Jesus Christ that we should make him free of our whole self, even the most secret sanctuary of our heart. All the glorious experience that others have given to us is a sampler for the gift of life in Christ. Easter is the moment when this gift breaks like a dawn, it is the great moment

of humankind. *This is the Day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it!*

### The Church With Psalms Must Shout

The Christian Church is the way Jesus left for people to enter into this Easter moment. The moments described in the Easter gospels are offered to us in the liturgy: the entering of the empty tomb, the greeting of the Risen Lord, the breaking of bread, the opening up of the Scriptures. If Jesus were a sinful human being, limited and enslaved, our religion would be a cult, and we would be in danger of inheriting death. It is because he is the eternal Son of God that we safely entrust our humanity to him, and make him the teacher and companion he offers to be. The Church must be united in him, must show itself a communion of life, a loving and selfless deliverer of the gifts of Christ to the world. At Easter we must show our true colours. Easter must be the supreme moment of the Church.

### Life Can Taste Of Easter

If we found our ultimate moment, but then decided that it was so isolated and lonely that the rest of our existence became pale and watery by comparison, it would be hard to recognise it as our doorway into life. Coleridge talked of a fellow poet who was a danger to others because he had *drunk the milk of paradise*. The Easter experience, far from separating us from others, puts us dramatically close to all who share human life. It is about life and death and eternity, and it inspires a generous love for life and all the living. There is no part of our life that cannot be embraced and transfigured by its meaning. Let it take hold of us, and waken us to courageous faith, firm hope, sincere love.

*Fr Philip*