

Our friends with intellectual disabilities, witnesses of the Lord's Resurrection

DID YOU KNOW? This year, we are celebrating the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, considered to be the first ecumenical council, during which, among other issues, the date of Easter, which is the central celebration for all Christians, was standardised. However, today, Catholics, Anglicans and Protestants refer to the Gregorian calendar (16th century) and the Orthodox to the Julian calendar (which comes from the Roman Empire).

Unifying the date of Easter would be a big step forward on the road to Christian unity. This year, 2025, due to the concordance of the Julian and Gregorian calendars, the Catholic and Orthodox Churches will celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus on the same day, 20 April.

As an ecumenical family, we at Faith and Light should be aware of this situation and, when we celebrate the death and resurrection of the Lord in our parishes, homes and monasteries, we should keep in mind all the communities throughout the world.

Let us pray for Christian unity and for the Holy Spirit to encourage us on the path of communion and fraternity.

The Gospels present the death and resurrection of Jesus through stories rich in details and intensity. In these stories, characters appear with a first and last name, who personally experienced these events more than two thousand years ago in Jerusalem and the surrounding area, in a land that lived under the Roman Empire and which is still today the scene of war and violent conflict.

Among these people were Jesus' disciples. When we read the texts, we immediately see that these men and women loved their master very much, but that they were a little lost and disoriented and that Jesus' death on the cross was a heavy blow to them and filled their hearts with fear and frustration.



Only a few women seem to have always been at the side of the Lord, even at the foot of the cross. Among them was Mary Magdalene, whom Pope Francis called the « apostle to the apostles » and who was a privileged witness to the experience of the Resurrection. Discovering that Jesus lived in a different way changed the lives of the disciples, who began to understand his last words before he died: there was a reason to hope and so much to tell others. The Resurrection is the cornerstone for Christians, as a living experience of faith in their own history. A gift, not to be kept, but to be proclaimed in every corner of the world. God so loved us!

And today, we are in a Faith and Light community, trying to relive what the first disciples of Jesus experienced. Death and resurrection, darkness and light, cross and glory. All of this experienced every day of our lives, sometimes at the same time, and among so many brothers and sisters who continue to be 'crucified', and others who are light and hope for all of humanity. Yes, the death and resurrection of Jesus are a living reality: it is not a simple ancient story that we tell by tradition.

And our friends with an intellectual disability, the heart of our communities, are privileged witnesses of this Resurrection, as were Mary Magdalene, Peter, John and so many others. With their ability to bring us back to basics, to love without prejudice, to draw that precious, genuine and simple smile, to give a wholehearted embrace. Yes, with all these abilities and more, they are best placed to welcome the miracle of Life conquering Death. And God knows it and relies on them to be exceptional and unique heralds. And I feel it too, that's why I am attached to them and sometimes I believe that God has called me to be part of a Faith and Light community so that I can believe without having seen or touched and so that I can trust. Our friends show us the way, they open the heavy door of the tomb for us so that we stop looking among the dead for HE WHO IS ALIVE.

Happy Easter !

United in Jesus

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