

**Homily Outline for Easter Sunday  
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception  
April 21, 2019**

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- I. You don't have to be an avid golfer to know the name Tiger Woods.
  - A. For years, Tiger Woods was the most dominant golfer in the world, winning tournament after tournament.
    - 1. He won the U.S. Masters at Augusta in 1997 with a record score at age 21, making him the youngest man ever to earn the title. Woods won another 13 major tournaments and was named the PGA Player of the Year 10 times over the next 12 years.
    - 2. Then it all fell apart. He had knee surgery in 2008, marital problems led to divorce in 2010, and back surgeries in 2014, 2015 and 2017 left him sidelined from competition for long periods of time.
    - 3. With his victory at the 2019 Masters this past April 14, Woods claimed his first major title in nearly 11 years.
  - B. Some news stories have called this the "resurrection of Tiger Woods." While his return to top form is indeed an amazing comeback, the use of the word "resurrection" is obviously meant as a metaphor, in that his golfing career had been left for dead, but had been remarkably revived.
- II. I mention this because it seems that some people, including a good number of Christians, think the reference to Christ's resurrection is just a metaphor, that is, they would say that Jesus did not actually rise from the dead, but was "resurrected" only in the metaphorical sense that he was kept alive in the memories of His followers.
  - A. The problem with this understanding of our Lord's resurrection is that it does not make sense in light of the experience of the first Christians, especially their martyrdom.
  - B. People do not die for metaphors. The first Christians went willingly to their deaths rather than deny the truthful reality that Jesus had physically risen from the dead. If they were simply speaking metaphorically that Jesus was still alive in their thoughts and memories, and that the life they hoped for after their own deaths was only a figure of speech, I do not think they would have been so hopeful and confident about the implications of their dying as martyrs.

III. This is essential to keep in mind when we think about the deaths of our loved ones or even anticipate our own deaths. When my mother died last month, just as when my father died 21 years ago, I did not have just an abstract notion that my parents would simply remain in my thoughts and memories. I have a firm hope of seeing them again in the presence of Almighty God in the Kingdom of Heaven. This is what we mean when we say in the Apostles' Creed that we believe in the "resurrection of the body" and in the Nicene Creed we profess at Mass every Sunday when we say that we believe in the "resurrection of the dead."

IV. Burning of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris has been much on my mind this week.

A. I am confident that Notre Dame Cathedral will be rebuilt.

1. Almost a billion dollars have already been pledged for the rebuilding.
2. Protestors (9,000 "Yellowjackets") in Paris complained that this money should be used for the working class.
  - a) Apparently the spirit of the French Revolution has not yet been extinguished!
  - b) The influence of secularism is strong in France and throughout Europe.
3. There are 67,000,000 people in France; if the \$1 billion were divided among them, that would come to \$15 per person;
4. If we reduced that number to focus on the working class, let's say 50,000,000 people, that comes to \$20 per person; not significant enough to make much impact!

B. Silver lining is that rebuilding Notre Dame Cathedral may help rebuild the community of faith in France.

V. Easter is the celebration of new life!

A. We are all called to renew our lives of faith.

B. Our Lord's resurrection opens the gates of heaven with the hope of eternal life for us as well.

C. May God give us this grace. Amen.