

Easter Vigil
April 11, 2020

A few weeks ago an article appeared in an Italian newspaper recounting the experience of a doctor treating patients with the Coronavirus. The unnamed doctor recounts, “Nine days ago, a 75-year-old priest came to us for medical help. He was a kind man, he had grave respiratory problems, but he had a Bible with him and it impressed us that he was reading the Bible to the people who were dying and holding their hands. We were all tired, discouraged doctors, psychologically and spiritually spent, and so we found that we were listening to him. Now we must admit, as human beings, we have reached our limits, there is nothing more we can do and more people are dying every single day. Two of our colleagues have died and others are infected. We realized that we have reached the limits of what man can do. We need God and we have begun to ask for His help. We speak among ourselves and we cannot believe that we who were fierce atheists are now seeking for interior peace by asking God to help us so we can care for the sick. Yesterday, the 75-year-old priest died. Despite the fact that in the last three weeks we have had over 120 people die in our unit and we are all exhausted and feel destroyed, he succeeded despite his own condition and our own difficulties to bring us the peace that we had no longer hoped to find.”

This is truly an Easter story for in the resurrection of Jesus, God takes up from where humanity has reached its limit. With death, man has reached his limit, but with the Resurrection man’s limit is shattered and God makes it possible for us to share in the limitless opportunity of life in Christ. And what is the sign of this life in Christ, peace, the peace that Jesus gave to his disciples and the faithful women upon his Resurrection from the dead. A peace that has no limits, a peace that suffering and death cannot take away. Where the world sees only suffering and death, the Christian sees something else and that is the limitless possibility of the fullness of life now and forever. In an Easter homily, Pope Benedict reminds us “faith in the

resurrection of Jesus says that there is a future for every human being: the cry of unending life which is part of every person is indeed answered.”

Yet, this unending life is possible only if we reject sin and the promptings of the evil one and say yes to God, only if we live our lives away, only if we live our life like the priest in the hospital who was more concerned for others than for himself, only if like the doctor we reach the depths of our limits and there find God who gives us the grace and peace to keep giving, even though it seems so futile.

Yes, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has gone beyond human limits and in his love and mercy made it possible for us to go along with him. Alleluia Alleluia.