

# Maiapu Church Gazette

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## EASTER IN WARTIME

The Easter season has come to us once again amid the turmoil and anxiety of world-war. At first sight it might seem that the new era, the new message, and the new hope for mankind which began with the Resurrection morn have been brought to nullity by this great modern tragedy of national strife.

Yet it must be recollected that the Resurrection morn was preceded by the tragedy of Calvary and that we of this age can no more perceive the working out of the Eternal mind than could the first Christians or their opponents in the year 29 A.D. If Annas Caiaphas and the Pharisees, with Pontius Pilate, King Herod, and the Emperor Tiberius had been told that the crucified Leader had left behind Him a body of ideas and a small body of men who believed in these ideas and that the innate potency of the ideas transmitted through the burning zeal of the faithful few would transform mankind and replace the temporal empire of Rome by a spiritual empire more powerful and more durable, with what scornful laughter would they have received this statement! Yet the seemingly impossible happened, and the New Way, as it was called, gradually supplanted the old way.

At first, of course, and through long centuries, the emphasis in Christian teaching was on the supernatural elements and upon the doctrines of the Church in relation to these and eternal life. In our own day, though the supernatural remains an essential in Christianity, more and more emphasis is being laid upon applied Christianity — upon the

teaching and example of the Founder as they can be worked out in social amelioration and also—mockery though it seems at present—in smoothing away the rugged boundaries between contending nationalities. Darkness shows us worlds of light we never saw by day.

Similarly, the darkness of the war reveals new hopes for mankind. And those hopes are indissolubly intertwined with the teaching of peace and goodwill. The Allies do not fight a war of conquest. They fight to achieve a peace in which the doctrines and spiritual principles that were finally liberated among man in the year of the Crucifixion may be brought at long last to some degree of practical realisation.

No greater mistake can be made than to place the golden age of religion in the early days of Christianity. This age of ours itself is, or may be made, an age of gold—an age for the transmutation of the more violent elements in man's nature into the gentler, more humane, and more brotherly elements of the higher man that is potential in all human beings. If Easter be regarded not as something final and not as a mere historical event, albeit a most pregnant and notable one, and if it can be regarded as a season of spiritual rebirth even in the midst of calamity, then there is hope that the dark horizons that encompass the world at present may again be suffused with "the light that never was on sea or land," and that, out of the dread shadows of tragedy, mankind may emerge into that brighter and more beautiful world which Christianity has to offer.

In one respect, at least the triumph which, soon or late, will end this war must resemble the Easter triumph. It will be the outcome of anguish beyond reckoning, of sacrifice, heroism and patience. But suffering is not enough, not even when allied with intelligence. We must go one step farther in the assimilation with Easter; we must will that our victory shall be the victory of all mankind, and that our sacrifice shall be for the good of all men, even our enemies.

These things are easy to write but hard to practise. War is the greatest breeder of cynicism and as it draws out over the years, we find it more difficult to believe that justice is more than a word, or that reason, love and pity are indestructible. Yet it is only those who hold fast to these Christian values who can hope to reconstruct the world; to lose them would be the ultimate defeat. "This is the victory," said the Apostle, "which overcomes the world—even our faith"; no less certainly is it the means by which the world can be rebuilt.

—Herald-Tribune, Hastings

### All That Christ Is

All that Christ was and is still attracts the soul that sees it. If an eclipse dims or veils the sight of Him for the moment we may be sure that this warm, healing Sun of our life has not set. He is still there, and some of us continue to feel our hearts burn with His presence, which is as unmistakable a reality as is the rock-ribbed earth upon which we tread.

What He needs is better organs to reveal Himself through, richer, truer, holier lives to show His love through, more finely organised personalities for His grace to break through into the world. He cannot preach without our lips, comfort without our help, heal without our hands, carry the truth without our feet, remove the shadow without our faith and effort.

The invisible works through the visible, the unseen and eternal through ourselves.—Rufus M. Jones.  
From The Healing Messenger.