

## 2019- CHILDREN'S MASS

Thank-you children for flowering our Cross. You have changed something which looked ugly into something colourful and cheerful.

Why did we ask you to make the ugly cross into something which looks beautiful? The reason is this:

In Our Lord's day the Cross was a thing people were terrified of. It was a way of torturing criminals and slowly putting them to death. Sometimes condemned people hanged on them for days in terrible pain before they died. It was a punishment people dreaded and lived in fear of. Yes it was terribly ugly.

Our Beloved Jesus suffered the ugliness of the Cross. He died in horrible agony. And we know that He died. A spear was thrust through His heart to make sure that He was properly dead.

But three days later Jesus was seen to be alive again. Hundreds of people met Him, touched Him and spoke to Him. It was the same Jesus- there was no doubt about that- but His body was different. It was a body no longer subject to things like hunger, suffering or aging. He could appear wherever He willed.

So when you smothered the ugly cross with flowers and made it look beautiful you were celebrating the fact that the ugly cross did not defeat Jesus but that it was a pathway to a great victory. Death was defeated. Jesus rose to life again and now reigns in heaven as the King of the Universe. In making the Cross beautiful you are celebrating the truth that death is no longer to be feared. Because Jesus' resurrection tells us that after we have passed through death we will live with a new glorious type of body with Jesus, Mary and all the angels and saints in heaven.

The Cross for Christians is no longer a symbol to be hated. It is a sign which gives us great hope for it tells us that death is not the end for us. It tells us that there is life beyond death; and it will be a far better life- a life without violence, hunger, suffering or aging. That is why we asked you, children, to flower the Cross.

Here's another question- Why do we eat Easter eggs at Easter time? What do Easter eggs tell us about Jesus?

An easy answer is to say that Easter eggs are really yummy and make us happy and it is right to be happy at Easter time. And that is an OK answer.

But think more deeply- there is an even better answer.

When you break the shell of an egg a lovely golden yolk runs forth which is great to eat because it is tangy and tasty and filled with proteins.

But if you put the same egg under a broody hen for 21 days, an awesome thing happens. Out from the shell comes a golden chicken with legs, beak, fluffy feathers and lots of chirping noise. How did the runny egg become a living chicken? Think about that! It is a miracle!

The egg has a message for us about the change in Jesus after He was risen from the dead.

Before His death Jesus had a body just like ours. Then He went into the dark tomb for three days. In the dark of Easter Sunday morning, His Father rose Him to life- with a whole new type of body. It was the same Jesus- but very different in form. The egg and the chicken help us understand that the change which happened to Jesus is not crazy. Such a change happens every time a chicken becomes an egg. That is why the egg is such an important symbol of the resurrection of Jesus.

Let us enjoy our Easter eggs and let us put flowers at the foot of the Crosses we have in our homes. Easter is a day we celebrate with joy. It is a day of enormous hope.

In a few minutes we will renew our Baptismal commitments. We will publicly proclaim that we are dead to Satan, to sin and to all evil and alive to life with God in Jesus Christ. And as we are sprinkled with baptismal water we will beg the Holy Spirit to come upon us, just as He came upon us at our Baptisms and help us to be ever more faithful in our commitment to our dearest Saviour, the Risen Lord Jesus.

And after that I will have the great joy of receiving Mrs Melva Atkins into the Church and bestowing the Sacrament of Confirmation upon her. For the last 8 months Melva has been a member of our Parish RCIA programme and now asks to be a part of our Parish family. Melva will be sponsored by her Granddaughter Leigh Anderson.

Melva, in your life as a resident at Kiri Te Kanawa, you are already a magnificent witness of the Risen Lord. It is such a joy to receive you into our Faith.

We are all an Easter People. When people meet us may they sense that we are alive in Christ. And through the witness of our love may they know that:

**Christ is risen Is risen indeed.**

**CHRIST IS RISEN IS RISEN INDEED.**

**ALLELUIA!!**

