

1] Fifty days ago we commemorated the expulsion of Adam from paradise on Cheesefare Sunday. Tonight we have come to the Resurrection and in the midst of our spiritual joy let us pause to consider what this must mean for us. There is a mystical connection between the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil through which Adam and Eve fell and the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, through which they were raised up again. The same mystery has been played out in each one of us who has been born into this world, so that we, too, have fallen yet who also have been baptised into Christ, so that we stand tonight, risen with Him.

2] Ever since we were conceived in the womb our minds have been subject to our bodies. Indeed, in this world, body and mind are so interwoven that a physical organ, our brains, dominate our whole being. Is it not true that just our mind can affect the workings of the body, so too the body can so disturb the workings of the mind. Truly, good and evil, pleasure and pain drive the way we act: only, in this world, for each of us the body is king and rules over all we do.

3] Here is the beginning of our mystical connection with the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. According to St Maximos, that tree represents both the whole created order as well as our own bodies, through which we are enslaved to creation, rather than set free through service to the Creator.

4] But thanks be to God who by His incarnation in the flesh has taken upon Himself that good and evil, that pleasure and pain. But not only that: in the body He also suffered for us on the Cross the the death which is the fruit of our Sin. And by His obedience to the will of the Father, He defied Death and conquered it. For from now on, those baptized into the faith of Christ are no longer subject to Death. For us, dying to this world is but a passing through not a dead end!

5] Meanwhile, let each one of us work all the harder to remain in this grace; that none us fall away yet again, returning once more to

a life where the mind serves the continuous demands of the fallen body. But how can we do this? How can we live the risen life in Christ, we, who are so used to comforting the body; who by habit have grown used to pandering to ourselves?

6] St Paul gives us the solution, writing to the church of the Philippians he says, *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God... made Himself of no reputation... coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.* [Phil.2:5-8]

7] So in as much as we have acquired the mind of Christ, we know that we are living the life of the kingdom of God, even now in this world. You have no need for me to remind you that, together in the Church, we have all the means of sharing in this mind of Christ. Like the early followers of the Way with the apostles who '*continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*' [Acts.2:42] For to the Church has been committed the means of grace, binding and loosing and together we are the body of Christ, not in conformity to this world but newly formed and led by the mind of Christ.

8] The choice for us is simple: do we prefer to remain for a short season in this Time-bound world or will we, even now, begin to enjoy a foretaste of our own resurrection? As St Paul writes to the Ephesians the Father, '*has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places .*' [Eph.1:3] We are among those who have taken up the tree of the Cross and have found it to be the gate of paradise. We have regained access now to the Tree of Life, the communion of the Holy Gifts. Here begins the judgement, even in the house of God: will it be pain and pleasure for a time and die in our sins or do actually believe, are we of the same mind, that through the Cross we too shall come to life everlasting?