

## FAITH IN MEDICINE THE PHYSICS OF THE RESURRECTION

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### ABSTRACT

It is an article of the Christian faith that Christ was dead and He rose again. In rising from the dead He defeated death and lives. Many have decided this is impossible and cannot imagine such power over nature and matter. The restoration of life required intimate and sudden restorations of bodily, cellular and sub-cellular function. This article explores situations where such things may be seen even today. Examples are of miracles, incorrupt Saints and even the Blessed Sacrament itself.

### INTRODUCTION

In the last issue, we set out the evidence that Christ died on the cross and the way in which St John in particular sought to quell any doubts people might have that Christ was just very sick when he was taken down from the Cross [1]. *"But after they were come to Jesus, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side, and immediately there came out blood and water. And he that saw it, hath given testimony, and his testimony is true. And he knoweth that he saith true; that you also may believe."* [2].

And then, of course, we are given real evidence of the resurrection of Christ. St Thomas was asked to put his fingers in the holes in His hands and His side [3]. And Our Lord pointed out rather well that he was not dead by eating fish. [4] Put simply it is an article of the Christian faith that Our Blessed Lord died, was truly dead and then was truly alive again after his Resurrection. Of course Our Lord is not the only one to have risen from the dead. Lazarus, and Jairus' daughter [5] also rose back from the dead, but they died again later on.

### IS DEATH REVERSIBLE?

It is very clear that death is not reversible. Within few seconds of death pathological and biochemical changes occur so that, within minutes, resuscitation is impossible. Blood clots, acidosis occurs, potassium is released from intracellular space and after that, rigor mortis sets in. Anyone who has seen a tragic and sudden death of a healthy person knows that the changes caused by death are so rapidly and totally irreversible.

Given that we believe that Our Lord (as well as Lazarus and others) was dead, and that He came back to life, it is worth thinking through what it would take for that to happen.

Firstly, resurrection from a dead body's dysfunctional biochemistry and clotted blood etc, requires an intimate transformation in every cell of the body so that each cell works properly again. In Lazarus and Jairus' Daughter that transformation was pretty well instantaneous, and we may reasonably assume that the same is true of Our Lord's resurrection. To achieve resurrection therefore, sudden and complete atomic, molecular and structural and functional changes must occur to restore the dead to that which is living.

### THE CONDITION OF CHRIST'S RISEN HUMANITY

*645 By means of touch and the sharing of a meal, the risen Jesus establishes direct contact with his disciples. He invites them in this way to recognize that he is not a ghost and above all to verify that the risen body in which he appears to them is the same body that had been tortured and crucified, for it still bears the traces of his Passion. Yet at the same time this authentic, real body possesses the new properties of a glorious body: not limited by space and time but able to be present how and when he wills; for Christ's humanity can no longer be confined to earth, and belongs henceforth only to the Father's divine realm. For this reason too the risen Jesus enjoys the sovereign freedom of appearing as he wishes: in the guise of a gardener or in other forms familiar to his disciples, precisely to awaken their faith.*

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Christ's risen body could walk through walls, and also appear as he wished, but such things merely attest (on a smaller scale) the same ability to make sudden and complete atomic, molecular and structural and functional changes. Changes that are attested by His resurrection.

It follows from all that that God, who created everything has complete mastery over all that He created, including of course, all matter. His original creation of the universe, demonstrated His (remarkable) ability to create big things, as well as His extraordinary ability to create the most tiny things. All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made.[5]

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But that said, we rarely see sudden changes in matter of the type that must have been required for the Resurrection. Can such changes ever be evidenced?

## EVIDENCE OF THE TRANFORMATION OF MATTER AND LIVING CELLS

There are in fact a number of things that we see now that do seem to provide such evidence. I hope to return to each of these in future editions of the CMQ

Firstly we see, in some miracles, instant transformations of cellular tissue with complete and radical recreations of functioning body parts where those parts were utterly dysfunctional. My favourite miracle is that of Jack Traynor, a Liverpudlian soldier and then cripple who was badly shot up in Gallipoli. With severed nerves that would not regrow, paralysis, intractable epilepsy and a silver plate in his skull, he was truly incurable. His cure was instant in Lourdes and complete, occurring as the Our Blessed Lord's body was raised above him at the Blessed Sacrament procession. He ran to the Grotto to thank Our Lady and walked home from Liverpool Lime Street station working as a collier from then on. His story [7] is a must read. In the miracle of Vittorio Michaeli [8] a pelvis that was destroyed by cancer which was cured. But not only was he cured, the bony architecture of his pelvis was restored to normal. In both of these cures we see sudden, instant and complete restorations of structure and function. These cures are, in reality, precisely the kind of change that would have been required at the Resurrection. They are sudden transformations of cellular biochemistry and structure, well documented and occurring in recent times.

Another example of God's control over matter comes from the incorruptible bodies of saints. A number of saints have been found to be incorrupt. St Bernadette is an example [9] and when she was disinterred, pathological examination shows the liver to be fresh, as if she was just 20 minutes after death. The Rosary which was on her incorrupt hand has rusted through in places. But her body had not decayed. And for the doubters such as St Thomas, her

incorrupt body (at the age of 169) can be seen in her convent in Nevers, France with a new rosary on her hand.



St Bernadette's incorrupt body, may be seen in Nevers, France

St Francis Xavier [10] died in China and his body was put into quicklime (Calcium Oxide which) to rot it down as quickly as possible. When he was disinterred to bring his body home to Goa his body was found to be unscathed and incorrupt.

There are many more examples of God's control over matter, but a final example is that of Lanciano, where a tiny vial of what was once wine, is blood which liquefies on the same day each year [11].

## CONCLUSION

In this short piece I have tried to explore what must have happened at the Resurrection. The evidence from miracles, and elsewhere attest God's ability to control, create and change matter instantly. Christ's death and resurrection is historically evidenced [12], but the sort of underlying physical changes that must have occurred in his resurrection can also, sometimes, be observed in modern times, by those who are willing to see.

Something incomprehensible is not for that reason less real

*Pascal*

## REFERENCES

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- [12] Tacitus Annals 15:44