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FAITH IN LIFE

Christ is risen, death is conquered, all is new. This is the Easter message which has been proclaimed anew from pulpits throughout the Christian world. This message is the reason why a scattered group of frightened, despairing people whose very existence was threatened came together again. This message became the guideline which kept the community alive. It was the driving factor which maintained the existence of the community and helped it to grow. In other words, life was stronger than death. To celebrate Easter means having faith in itself. Life means being awake and stretching upwards — the opposite of resignation and giving up.

But faith in life is not a matter of course; belief in life does not just happen. In spring especially, the most promising season in which everything awakes, thrives and is astir, we are often afflicted by lethargy. Winter's heavy hand is difficult to shake off and often we are not even aware of its influence. You

get used to it as you get used to litter lying around. No wonder that we give up and wait for a miracle. "Here only a miracle can help", we are inclined to say when we feel like withdrawing from life's struggle.

Easter is a protest against all this, Easter is resurrection, spring, life. Easter is a rebellion against death and resignation. Christian tradition means believing in life, in the world and not relinquishing the belief in the future. Living in the spirit of Easter means involvement and struggle for better conditions on earth. Easter shakes us out of complacency. Faith means having an open mind about the reality of this world and I wish for you, dear reader, and myself that this belief in life will take effect as a guideline. We need such guidelines to counterbalance the human tendency towards resignation and complacency. This renewal of faith is not like the eruption of a volcano. The effect of the Easter-message is a gentle process which gradually grows. A good life doesn't happen overnight.

It is just like spring not bursting upon us suddenly but in a slow and gentle process which finally produces blossoms.

The message that life conquers death has given many human beings the strength to hold on, to try again and realise that life after all makes sense. Faith that life is stronger than death builds the community. The conviction that life is full of sense unites us with our fellow Swiss and also with the people of this country whose guests we are. Quality of life is something that concerns all of us. We must all play our part to achieve this. While everywhere the question of sources of energy is debated, the Easter-message tells of a breakthrough that does not depend on outward resources. Here lies its strength.

My Easter wish to all readers of the *Swiss Observer* is that, wherever they may be this Easter-tide, they experience a new beginning which will grow and bring them joy and hope. In this sense: Happy Easter.

Pfr. U. Steiner



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