

Father Bob's Easter Homily

Easter Sunday • 2026

P.K. Chesterton, a famous British Christian apologist, once said: "When people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing—they believe in everything."

What he meant was that if we don't believe in God, we often end up believing in anything and everything that comes along.

Archbishop Fulton Sheen had a similar, though slightly different, take. He said that those who do not believe in God often end up believing in themselves—and he did not mean that in a good way. He meant elevating oneself over God.

Mr. Lee Strobel was one such man. He was an atheist and an investigative reporter for the Chicago Tribune. When his wife converted to Christianity, it deeply upset him. Determined to prove her wrong, he set out to disprove Christianity.

Using his investigative skills, he traveled across the United States, interviewing experts in Scripture, history, and archaeology. He wanted to uncover the truth—particularly about the Resurrection.

One common theory is that the Resurrection was a hoax—that Jesus did not rise from the dead, but that His body was stolen by the disciples.

So what did Mr. Strobel discover?

The experts told him that it was highly improbable—almost impossible—that the disciples stole the body.

Consider this: after the Resurrection, the disciples were afraid. They were in hiding. The tomb itself was guarded by Roman soldiers and sealed with a Roman seal. To break that seal and steal the body would have been a capital offense, punishable by death.

So the idea that the disciples stole the body is extremely unlikely.

And even if they had—what would be their motive?

If they had stolen the body, they would have been knowingly promoting a lie. Yet we know that eleven of the twelve apostles died as martyrs, proclaiming the truth of the Resurrection.

People do not die for what they know is a lie. They died for what they believed to be true.

What about the early accounts of the Resurrection? Were they simply legends?

Historians point out that legends take a long time to develop—often generations. But the accounts of the Resurrection appeared very quickly—within months of Jesus' crucifixion.

That makes the idea of legend highly unlikely.

For comparison, after the death of Alexander the Great, it took over 400 years for legendary accounts about him to develop. But with Jesus, accounts of the Resurrection spread almost immediately.

Then there is eyewitness testimony.

Scripture tells us that Jesus appeared to many people after His Resurrection—at one point to over 500 people. These encounters happened at different times and in different places, yet the accounts are consistent.

And one final detail: if someone were inventing this story and wanted it to be believed, they would not have chosen women as the first witnesses.

In the first century, women were not considered reliable witnesses in a court of law. And yet, the Gospels clearly state that women were the first to encounter the risen Christ.

All of this evidence profoundly impacted Lee Strobel. He set out to disprove Christianity—but instead, he came to believe. He was eventually baptized and became a follower of Jesus Christ.

What this shows us is that people come to faith in different ways. Some come through reason and investigation. Others come through simple faith and trust in the mysteries we have been taught.

But what matters most is not how we arrive—what matters is that we arrive.

St. Thomas Aquinas once said: “For those who have faith, no explanation is necessary. For those without faith, no explanation will suffice.”

So no matter how we have come here today, let us pray that we are all believers in Jesus Christ and in His Resurrection.

As St. Paul reminds us: if Christ has not been raised, our faith is in vain.

But He has been raised.

And the Resurrection proves that everything Jesus said and did is true.

So today, as we celebrate our Lord's Resurrection, let us rejoice and be glad.

This is the day the Lord has made.

He is risen. He is truly risen.

Happy Easter. God bless you all.

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