

Easter Sermon

Rev. Kevin Hilgendorf April 12, 2020

We gather in Spirit and Truth. In the name of our Risen Savior Jesus Christ.

I recall a Sunday School Teacher handing out colorful empty plastic eggs. The children were to look for a symbol of new life and place it in the egg bringing it to class next Sunday for show and tell. As they gathered back for class the following Sunday, they were eager and excited to open their eggs. One by one they opened their eggs. A new yellow flower like a dandelion was revealed. Another, a round shaped stone. The class was puzzled until the child said it's the stone that rolled away from the tomb! Out came a beautiful butterfly from another egg. Last egg to be opened, there was nothing inside it. The children said you forgot to put something in it. No said the child, the tomb is empty! Jesus is Risen!

The Gospel tells us, "But the Angel of the Lord said, 'Do not be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He has been raised from the dead, and indeed He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him.'" I remember an Easter message at the National Cathedral in Washington D.C. First point is Jesus Christ is God! Jesus' resurrection proves his identity as God. As Colossians states, "so if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God...for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God." Second point, "Easter Changes Everything" is the title of a Wall Street Journal's article. Did not find that, however; came across Rick Warren's sermon with that same title. Briefly his message is you get to start over, keep going don't stop, and change your life accepting God's way. The third point that grabbed my attention, "In a Good Friday world we are still Easter People!" It came from a chaplain stationed in Iraq sharing this message to those serving. In a Good Friday world, we are still Easter People!

On Facebook I read "we find ourselves afraid and lost," Francis said, we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented...all of us called to row together each of us in need of comforting the other." In a Good Friday world, we are still Easter People.

"God's resurrecting power is not restricted to a moment in time, when Jesus arose from the dead, states Alaina Kleinbeck, but is the power that defines God's ongoing activity in the world in response to death and destruction." In a Good Friday world, we are still Easter People.

Jim Wallis states, "loving each other in the midst of a global pandemic...we are demonstrating love and commitment to each other by maintaining physical distance. On some level we just have to decide to have faith and hope."

In a Good Friday world, we are still Easter People. C.S. Lewis writes..."next to the blessed sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses. If one is your Christian neighbor is holy in almost the same way, for in your neighbor also Christ, the Glorifier and the Glorified. Glory himself, is truly hidden."

Be of good cheer Easter People, Christ is Risen! He is Risen, indeed!