

Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 1, 2018

Scripture Readings:

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

Colossians 3:1-4

John 20: 1-9

Today we celebrate the coming of the Easter Bunny with all his beautifully decorated eggs, some chocolate eggs even, jelly beans and other tempting sweets.

April Fool!

Okay, down to reality. Lent is a time of personal miracles, not dramatic, easily witnessed miracles, but change in stubborn willfulness, sinfulness, habits that hinder living God's Word. The abundance of meditations, the moving homilies, the little sacrifices, and the extra time spent in prayer pulls hearts a little closer to God. So we come to Easter, the communal celebration of the Resurrection; renewed and walking closer to Jesus, with a deeper spirituality and understanding of what we do here.

The last line of the gospel says, "For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead." Today in hindsight we do understand that Jesus had literally to rise from the dead. We celebrate with St. Paul when he says in the second reading, "When Christ your life appears, then you, too, will appear with him in glory." Our loving and merciful God has given us the ultimate consolation in the Resurrection, that death is not the end of our story.

Recently, upon the death of Stephen Hawking, a noted theoretical physicist, the media has often quoted Hawking's belief that "I think a conventional afterlife is a fairytale for people afraid of the dark." However, today we hear the Apostle Peter give witness that "This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance." Peter was only the first among millions, including the simple and the genius, who

have given their lives in steadfast belief of a loving God and the prospect of spending eternity with Him.

Twenty-two and a half years ago my beloved 17-year-old son died in a car wreck. In my grief I was given three dreams/visions(?). In the first one my son came into my kitchen where I was cooking. Upon seeing him, I was shaken and anxious. I asked him if he could stay. "Well, no, mom." Did it hurt? "I can't remember." Can you come again? "Maybe." That was all. In the second, longer one, I drove to a remote, rundown farmhouse to take all my food to the ragged group of people living there. The poor people greeted me and said in excitement, "He is here!" I didn't pay attention, not knowing who they meant. Suddenly my strong, beautiful son flew out the door of the house, leaped down the stairs and ran up to me, glowing with love. He wrapped his arms around me and I cried. I could feel my body shaking with sobs against his. Too soon it ended. The third time, the shortest, he stood in front of me on the couch and said, "I'm sorry. I didn't know. Wait 'til you see this place! I'll see you tomorrow."

The Resurrection is not a fairytale to me. It is the promise God has given me, has given all of us. Though fear of separation through death and grief is a daily struggle, deep in my bones there is joy and consolation. So let us raise up our tiny wooden crosses today and sing Alleluia and go out smiling as we thank God for His wondrous gift of eternal love.

Carla Boehl