

**So this is Resurrection!**

The story of the Resurrection is very ordinary, human and earthly too.

There is a lot of running to and fro. Lots of confusion, incomprehension and mistaken identities. People are just not getting it. There are angels and they don't get noticed.

In fact it would have carried on that way for a lot longer but Jesus spoke.

That was the moment of change. The turning point. It was the light returning to break up the darkness. When Jesus spoke it was the Easter fire kindled in the entrance of the tomb.

I can imagine Mary's face. I see her drawn and tired. You know how a person in grief or distress can have their face sort of collapse down. It is as if they get smaller somehow. Then add to that the horror of having the grave being robbed! Imagine the shock and the gut-twisting pain of your loved one's body having been pulled from the grave you placed them in. Tears stream down her face. She is distracted and fearful, desperate, turning this way and that, not knowing what she is saying almost.

Then she hears "Mary!"

Her name in his voice cuts through the darkness of her troubled soul and, like the first ray of morning light catching a high-rise window, there is a dazzle, like flame and fire and glory all at once breaking upon her.

Her features I see change and her eyes and mouth. Her hairline rises back as the frown lets go, shoulders move back, she straightens. She is remade by fire and light, rekindled in her heart.

And the flame jumps to the others too.

"I have seen the Lord!"

Bright eyed and clearly filled with joy. Her own light kindles light in them. They change. Can you imagine the ripple of transformation. Not a ripple, but a great tumbling wave of clear water rolling them in mind and heart. A wave of relief, of unbelief becoming truth. A clean, light-filled, cascade of waterfall joy breaking over tired legs and arms and souls clogged with grief and dried tears.

**So this is Resurrection!**

It is not being caught up into a far away heaven. It is not being given hefty, feathered wings and Philly cheese spread.

It is being here, being today, being with everything just the same, yet everything changed and transformed in a moment.

Isaiah proclaims a new heaven and a new earth, and it sounds a lot like our present heaven and earth, but, somehow, more as we all know it should be.

Mary, bright-eyed and laughing in startled disbelief in what she knows is true, but cannot be.

The disciples all talking at once and going in circles like a little-league baseball team that just won the final game.

Joy, and peace and hope and love all washing them.

It is both the *now* of the Gospel story *and* the next 30 years which is the Resurrection.

Because the Resurrection is actually what you live in if you have the life of Christ within you.

So Isaiah is a good guide to resurrection life. When the sparkle and the shock and the sheer overwhelming delight are, like bubbles in champagne, all gone. Then the living of it begins. Not unlike marriage as the outworking of falling delightfully in love with breathtaking momentum. So Isaiah's peaceable kingdom is an expression of the aim of the Resurrection life.

We are called then to live in this resurrection

It is a life marked by gladness and joy.

It is a life where weeping and distress are not the trademarks, but the exceptions.

It is a life lived fully and well.

It is a settled and secure and a stable way of living, not flitting and anxious, but deep and connected.

It is a life in which you work, and in which your work rewards you.

It is a life in community, with elders and children.

It is a life where respect and care extends to wolves and lambs, to lions and oxen,

Perhaps to tar sands and rivers, to the air and the oceans.

It is a life consciously lived not in "what I own", but in knowing you live constantly in the Hand of the Creator.

For all the earth is God's holy mountain.

We, who name ourselves as the Church, the Body of Christ, are called to live in the Resurrection.

Not as a dogma to be believed, but as a way of living out our lives.

We are called to *live* the Resurrection

in the trust that this man Jesus, who surely died, is alive in our hearts.

He knows you by name, and holds you precious and loved.

He trusts you to be his hands and feet, his lips to speak and his heart to love.

He asks to dwell in you as he once did in a carpenter's son long ago.

He asks you to model him in your living and in your dying and all that is in between

And to help you, to enable you

He gives you himself in food and drink in the eucharist,

his spirit in your life of prayer and contemplation,

and his fire to brighten your darkness

and his water to wash you clean and refresh you from weariness.

We celebrate Easter with fire and with water.

Remember what it feels like to have your candle kindled by someone else's. How did your face look, or the face of the person you gave light to? Remember this.

Remember what it feels like to have water splashing you as I flung the drops in showers towards you.

Recall your expression, the surprised laughter of those near you, the feeling of change on your skin where the water touched.

These little things we do in church are both reminders and provokers of the deep holy fire and the tumbling waves of God's love and transformation which you experience when resurrection changes from historical story to experienced and lived reality

So, at Easter we say, with gusto,

Alleluia the Lord is Risen.

He is risen indeed alleluia.