



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast April 19, 2020

Second Sunday of Easter Readings from the Revised Common Lectionary, Year A

- Acts 2:14a,22-32: Luke has described the coming of the Holy Spirit as best he can in human terms. He writes that it was “like the rush of violent wind” and “divided as of fire”. Now, on behalf of the other apostles, Peter has begun interpreting the event to the crowd that has gathered.
- Psalms 16: A confident entreaty containing the famous verse (10): “For you will not abandon me to the grave, nor let your Holy One see the Pit.”
- 1 Peter 1:3-9: A letter to churches in rural Asia Minor, addressed to those “chosen and destined” by the Father and “sanctified” by the Holy Spirit in order “to be obedient to Jesus Christ” and to share in the forgiveness available through Christ’s sacrificial death.
- John 20:19-31: Early on Easter Day, Mary Magdalene has recognized a man standing near the tomb as Jesus. She has told the disciples: “I have seen the Lord.” The disciples fear that they may suffer the same fate as their master.

“Not a sermon” . . .

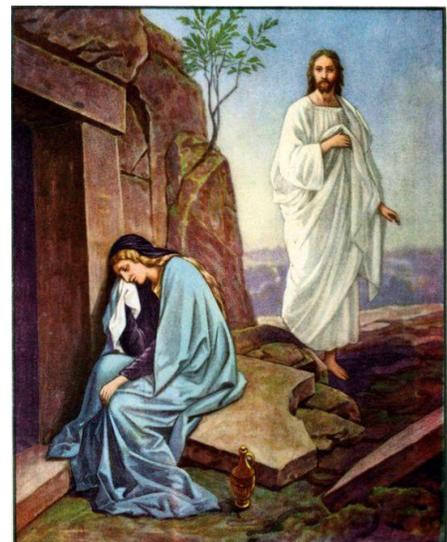
Last week Terry, a high school friend, sent me a short video of a contemporary American woman encountering her future self. In the video, “Explaining the Pandemic to my Past Self,” the woman’s future self used two striking phrases: “Do you want the good news or the bad news?” and “Your definition of a ‘pretty big deal’ is going to change.”

In the time between four months ago and now we have seen drastic changes. Thinking back to four months ago, what would have been good news and bad news for you? And what would have been your “pretty big deal?” How about now? What is good news and bad news, and what is a “pretty big deal?”

Today’s Gospel, from Chapter 20 in John, tells about Jesus’s resurrection on the third day. It is worth reading all of Chapter 20, for in it we see Mary experiencing what is bad news and good news and what is a “pretty big deal.” Mary stands outside the tomb weeping, and two angels appear to comfort her.

Suddenly a stranger appears behind Mary, someone she does not immediately recognize as Jesus. He reveals His true identity to her and says,

“Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”



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To say that Jesus’s Resurrection is a pretty big deal to Mary understates the incredible miracle she witnesses. And yet she is told “Do not hold on to me.” The earthly Jesus she knew is truly leaving,



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and Jesus tells her not to hold on to Him and grieve over Him but to transform her faith just as He was transformed through Resurrection. We all need to take a hard look at what our bad news is and good news is and what a “pretty big deal” really is in light of our faith these days.

So, here’s our challenge from today’s Gospel. What do we need to let go of in light of the Resurrection? What is good news and bad news for us now? And what is our “pretty big deal?” I’m going to do the same, and we’ll compare notes on the first Sunday of July, Raquette Lake Chapel’s first summer service when we ask ourselves those same questions again. May we all “read and inwardly digest” the message of the Gospel. AMEN.

Expressions of Faith

We have started conversations about Creeds in worship service. The two most commonly used are the Nicene Creed and the Apostles Creed, which are found in the Chapel service book. Creeds are essentially statements of faith. Each week in our “Blast” we will explore some thoughts about Creeds and different Creeds. Below are the “Expressions of Faith” from the Celtic Prayer Book, “Daily Office Evening Prayer.”

Lord, You have always given bread for the coming day; and though I am poor, today I believe.
Lord, You have always given strength for the coming day; and though I am weak, today I believe.
Lord, You have always given peace for the coming day; and though of anxious heart, today I believe.
Lord, You have always kept me safe from trials; and now, tried as I am, today I believe.
Lord, You have always marked the road for the coming day; and though it may be hidden, today I believe.
Lord, You have always lighted this darkness of mine; and though the night is here, today I believe.
Lord, You have always spoken when time was right; and though You be silent now, today I believe.

This Week Prayers for . . .

- comfort for John and support for Carol; Kevin’s continued health; Debbie and John; the Raquette Lake Chapel community and our new member Dean.
 - all who have died and those suffering from the COVID-19 virus.
 - all healthcare workers who are battling the COVID-19 virus and those providing essential services in our communities.
 - all those who have lost jobs and income and are facing an uncertain future.
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YouTube Sunday Evening Prayer Videos . . .

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbEMZwngMxckndnW_cRFCaA

Video note: Tonight’s service is a Celtic Evening Prayer. At the video link you will find videos with the title beginning “Interfaith, Spiritual, ...” These are short meditations and prayers from different traditions for my friends who are not part of a Christian community or any faith community. May they come to know God in their own way.

- blessings, Vance
