

“The Rest of the Story is Ours”

John 20:1-18

1st Pres San Bernardino

Rev. Dr. Sandra R. Tice

3/23/08 EASTER

It was not the study of the scriptures that caused them to believe.
Nor seeing the empty tomb and the oddly folded graveclothes.
Nor even seeing him, standing there, in the dim morning light.

None of those things, on their own, made things clear to them,
or caused them joy-

It was not until he called her by name: “Mary”-
that she suddenly believed in the resurrection.
And everything was different.

And so it is with us.
Resurrection cannot be apprehended or understood or logically arrived at.
It’s not like I can stand here and *explain* it to your satisfaction.
--But it can grab hold of you
It can change your life

You can’t explain resurrection,
But it can address you,
It can call you by name and make you realize
that though you may not be able to explain it,
you *believe* it:

- that he is here
- that he has work to do
- that he is calling you to new life.

**Maybe you have heard that voice speak to you through your own
laughter,** when you are still navigating the dark tunnel that is grief,
The experience of stifling a giggle,
When you believed you might never feel joy again,
And realizing you’ve shared a joke with the One who calls you by name.

Maybe your heart has been broken or betrayed,
And no amount of reason or understanding can make sense of it
Or make it OK
But one day you realize that love still lives in you, that you are healing
That someone has called you by name, to give you a future and a hope.

Maybe hearing your name has called you back

from the Living Death that is addiction.

Next month, Emily Kistner will celebrate her one year birthday of sobriety-

She knows something about resurrection, and about community,

About being called by name and surprised by new life.

On Maundy Thursday we recognize that he was one of us, he was human.

On Easter, we recognize that he was more. He is the Risen One.

The life of justice and mercy that he led is NOT over

The kindness and healing he brought has NOT come to an end

And the hope he gave to the ones who trust in Him

And the love he invited us to share

Still grab hold of us, and change us,

As surely as they changed the lives of the disciples.

In a few minutes, 10 men of our number who have heard his voice

Will be commissioned to take the news of the resurrection

Across the country to victims of Katrina

And the ones who will place crosses around their necks on behalf of the rest
of us- are teenagers who know that the Risen Christ is lurking there in the
Gulf Coast- they saw him themselves when they were there just last summer.

I can't **explain** Easter to you- this is where words fall short.

But I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that resurrection is real.

I have seen it.

So listen for that still small voice

Listen for the sound of your name

You may find, to your surprise, that you believe in the resurrection
and want to live it.

The rest of the story is ours. He is here.

He has work to do. He is calling us to join him.