

Third Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 1, 2022

Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]; Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19

Call – Jesus shows up with a mighty bounty

Easter is upon us. Jesus has risen from the grave.

What does that mean for us?

That's what we are exploring today.

We've done the Lent / Easter stuff: 40 days of giving things up, egg hunts, dyed eggs,

Held family dinners, special worship services and the like

But now, during Eastertide – what and who are we called to be in this season?

And what I especially sense from folks – even myself

Is this: What can I do? What difference can I make? How can I tell this Easter story?

How can I even begin to do justice to this story that has changed the world?

So what's our next move, typically? Apathy...for again, how can we tell the story any better?

I don't have a platform from which to share the Good News...so I go back to my ordinary life.

I go back to the law office, to the school, to the office where I work,

To the routine life I have as a stay-at-home parent,

or a grandparent who helps out with the grandkids.

Maybe the Scripture text can give us a clue as to what to do after encountering the risen Christ!

At this end of the Gospel of John, chapter 21, Jesus has died and has risen

The risen Jesus has appeared to Mary, and then to the disciples, and Thomas a little bit later.

And the focus is now on helping people to BELIEVE in Jesus Christ as God's son.

So, what did the disciples do after they encountered the resurrected Jesus? Easter happened, and Jesus is alive!

So, the disciples GO BACK TO WORK.

And for years I thought this as a dig at Peter and the disciples.

Like, "look at those slackers. Jesus is risen and what do they do? They go fishing!"

Have they forgotten all about Jesus?!?

Challenge – We get busy and don't respond

But perhaps, the fishing, the thing they know and love...is what they should be doing, after all!

They are in the boat, in the comfort of the KNOWN.

And they are re-engaging in their everyday life

Just like saying:

I'm go back to the law office, to the school, to the office where I work,

To the routine life I have as a stay-at-home parent,

or a grandparent who helps out with the grandkids.

Jesus comes along and – in the midst of their ordinary activity – Jesus does the miraculous.

"Got any fish?" Jesus yells from the shore to the disciples in the boat.

"No" says the disciples. (They don't realize it's Jesus yet.)

Jesus yells back, “Try casting the net on the other side!”

So they do. And the catch is so much!

Then, the disciple whom Jesus loved said, “It is the Lord!”

Aha! Here, in the boat, in the ordinary...Jesus shows up!

That net is so full of fish! They can barely pull it in!

There, in the boat, they realize. Jesus is with them. The resurrected Jesus still shows up somehow.

And in their ordinary, everyday work of fishing.

Their expectations are shattered. Jesus expands their understanding of what sharing the Gospel is all about.

They can, in returning to their work, after the Resurrection, still experience Jesus and THRIVE!

And most importantly, “BELIEVE!”

Completion – Our call is to everyday, ordinary...and occasionally, the spectacular

Folks, Jesus shows up.

We think, what can I say? What can I do? This Easter message is so much bigger than me.

And yes, the Resurrection is bigger than you or me or all of us

Bigger than our Easter eggs and family dinners and such

But Jesus calls us to live our lives...and Jesus promises to show up.

Jesus shows up in the mundane, when shopping, or preparing a meal.

Jesus shows up when we serve at the local food shelter.

Jesus shows up when donate time or gifts to our congregations and communities

Jesus shows up, whether we summon Jesus or not.

We are given the gift of faith, folks.

For this is the way God loved the world:

He gave his one and only Son,

so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

All who believe, through faith, like Mary, and the disciples...

We have the gift of belief, so that we might have TRUE LIFE, ABUNDANT LIFE

HERE and NOW

In the exciting and in the mundane

On the mountaintops, and in the valleys

This faith that God gives us also helps us to see hope in the midst of darkness

In the Ukrainian crisis, we can see glimpses of hope as people draw together to help those suffering.

In the plight of racism in this country,

we are doing the work of sharing difficult truths

and opening paths of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation

And we do these challenging things, knowing that our God has overcome death and the devil.

With our God showing us the way of hope and eternal life TODAY

We go back to work this Eastertide.

Not complacent, but MOVED in such a way that our work

BECOMES our witness

Whether we are volunteering as an usher or a videographer for our congregation

Or going back to our job and serving others
In all we do...in prayer and worship and everyday work
WE ARE SHARING THE GOSPEL OF HOPE
Of experiencing eternal life TODAY

For Jesus calls us to cast our nets on the other side of the boat,
And to BELIEVE that our God is with us
And that our God calls us to challenging and joyful WORK this day and every day.

The hymn, "Rise, O Church, Like Christ Arisen"
Describes this daily faith and daily work:

Service be our sure vocation;
courage be our daily breath;
mercy be our destination
from this day and unto death.
Alleluia, alleluia.
Rise, O church, a living faith.

We are Christ for the world, we are a living faith
Let us live as if this were true, everyday.
Amen!

AMEN!