

EASTER VIGIL April 20, 2019 Dignity/Boston

He is Risen. Resucitó.

The stone was rolled away and Mary Magdalene did not find him there. She told. The word was passed on. Believers and non believers alike heard. Some ran, some hid, some shrugged their shoulders probably. Others perhaps fell silent, feeling fear and wonder. Others waited daring to believe that this could not be the end.

We know the story. We know how it went.

Yes, Jesus rose from the dead. And everything changed.

I find the reality of the Resurrection a bit hard to preach on.

What more is there to say? All has been said.

He is Risen, really. We get it.

This fact is the cornerstone of our faith. Everything that we heard today - the creation story, the liberation from oppression, the words of prophets telling us that we are God's people was in preparation for the moment of the great Aleluya.

The Old Order prepared us for the Good News.

What more could I say today that we have not all said before and heard before.

I have no intention of saying something new. I am willing, however, to briefly share with you a few things that popped into my mind the past few days.

When I was at liturgy on Palm Sunday I was surprisingly touched by the song Now We Remain. Listening closely to the words this hymn reminds us that afraid or not, we were saved when dead became living, life from God's giving. And now we remain, living we remain.

Give me a moment...

Today, in one of the most beautiful liturgies of our Christian faith, we remember and we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus and we proclaim that we believe. It is a celebration that in our human experience might remind us of an important marker, a birthday, an anniversary - a time when year after year we mark something important that we want to remember and celebrate.

Every so often on Mother's Day, my mother used to remind us "every day is Mother's Day, you know." It is how you treat me, love me, obey me every day that matters". Yeah, I know. And life went on until the next Mother's Day.

We could quote my mother on a day like today. It is not that the celebration is not real, profoundly real, or joyful, or full of loudly Aleluyas and bells. We remember, we celebrate and we believe. Today.

But every day is Resurrection Day. We are the people of the Resurrection, our beliefs don't end on the remembering and the celebration. Our commandment begins in the believing, today and every day.

And living, now we remain... as witnesses and as actors; telling and living, like the early disciples.

In the Acts of the Apostles we hear "You will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judea and Samaria, and indeed to earth's remotest end." Witnessing was a direct command from Jesus after the Resurrection. Yes, the apostles of the day were afraid and had to receive the Holy Spirit before they took on the commandment of standing in witness to the Resurrection and to the teaching of Jesus as they knew it and understood it. But witnessing they did.

That command that Jesus gave his followers that day is the same one he gives to us and that we proclaim in the promises of our Baptism. Yes, we the living are called to witness to the real message of the Gospel, a message of Love above all else. Bearing witness to the reality that God became human as an act of love, and that the love of God for each of us is always real and ever present. We are called to be witnesses to the eternal mercy and compassion of God for all alike and to work for justice and peace in our world. We are called to witness to the promise of eternal life, making Hope alive in every human heart. We stand as witnesses of the Resurrection.

Every day is a celebration of the Resurrection and we are challenged to act as such. Witnesses and actors.

If we truly believe that living now we remain with Jesus the Christ, then we must act like it. We must live like it. After all, Jesus did not only free us, he showed us how to live.

I am not pretending that I know what that entails for anyone. Nor do I think that you have not heard this message before.

But if you are like me, there are times, especially in this broken world of ours, when I need to be reminded that it is in how I choose to live my life that I truly celebrate Easter.

I probably have choices every day to bring hope, and light to this small world and moment in history that I have the privilege to live in. And even if I succeed sometimes, I probably fail often. But I have no choice. I believe, and faith commands me, Jesus commands us to witness and to act as Easter people.

Today, when greed and hate are rewarded; when lies are accepted as truths; when the other is perceived as dangerous and the enemy; when the rights and dignity of all humans and the respect we owe Mother Earth is treated as an option and not a moral imperative; when hopelessness lives in the heart of young and old alike; when killing is the solution to conflict and despair...Yes, today, Jesus' command rings louder than ever.

Let us open our hearts and minds to the reality of the Resurrection and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Let us stand in witness; let us remain living in Jesus the Christ.

May each of our days on earth be a true celebration of the meaning of Resurrection .
May each day be Easter.

Resucitó! Jesus is Risen! Aleluya.

Lourdes Rodríguez

