

Happy Lord's Day, everyone!

The day of the Resurrection, Sunday, is a beautiful day. We come together to worship and then spend the rest of the day in recreation, in rest. Lovely.

Ok, let's get to the Kerygma, the Proclamation of the Gospel message. St. Paul says to the Romans, *"I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith..."* Three key terms here: gospel, power, salvation. First, gospel means "good news", perhaps you have heard this before. Not just any kind of good news, but explosively good news. The word Paul uses for power has the same root word as dynamite. The gospel is meant to be explosive in my life and in yours. It's meant to change everything about the way we approach life and see the world around us. Finally, the word for salvation has the same root as health or wholeness. You and I are meant to notice that something is missing in our lives, some kind of order or health is lacking. When we hear the gospel and surrender to it, we notice that we become whole. **So, to summarize this paragraph, the gospel is explosively good news that changes everything about our lives in the best possible way, making each of us and all of us whole and undivided.** Think about this question: *Is this your experience of Christianity?* Unfortunately, I think for many Christians - most Christians - the honest answer is "no". We're going to go back and look at the foundational story, the Kerygma, and see if perhaps the Lord wants to do something new in our minds and in our hearts.

The Kerygma, the proclamation of the gospel, can be proclaimed in a variety of ways. At its foundation, there are four parts: The beginning, the Fall, Jesus, and life after Jesus. I prefer one priest's approach, who keeps it to four simple words: CREATED, CAPTURED, RESCUED, RESPONSE.

We see in the stories of creation in the Book of Genesis that there is one God, who is incredibly good; who creates everything that exists, freely, without effort, and it's all good. He creates because he loves. The highlight of everything he makes is you, the human person, made in his image and likeness. Males and females together share in the unique and equal identity of being the only creatures who are able to represent God on earth. Stop and think about this for a moment. Look up and all around, see how incredible creation is. See how incredibly big the universe is. Go to your computer and look up images of the Hubble Space Telescope. The universe is so big! There are so many stars! God made it all. And his favorite creature, out of everything he made, is you. We're limited by our bodies and by our minds, so we can't have too many "favorites". God is not limited in the same way, so he can honestly look at you and say to you, *"You are my favorite. I love you and care about you so much. I know everything about you, all of your best qualities and all of those things that you're not especially proud of, and I love you in the midst of it all."* And as if that wasn't enough, the Bible reveals that God has a plan for your life and for mine, which is to become like him. St. Peter says, *"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature."* God, who is so incredibly good, wants you to become like him. That's who you are to him, that's what we're talking about when we talk about creation. There are no unimportant persons. Rather, each and every human person is so amazing and is intended by God to become godly. Powerful!

That, brothers and sisters, is the first part of the Kerygma. Stay tuned for the second part next week. In the meantime, spend some time looking up, reflecting on the grandeur of God and on your own identity as one who is deeply loved by him.

May the Lord give you his peace!  
Fr. Bryan