



Bringing Home the Word

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord (C)

April 21, 2019

Lost...Then Found!

By Mary Katharine Deeley

My daughter was about four when we went to the local department store to do some shopping. I was looking over some item when I turned and realized she wasn't beside me. It was not like her to wander away, and I spent a frantic fifteen minutes before I located her sitting on the floor playing with a doll from a display. I was at once relieved and angry, but more scared than anything else. What if something had happened?

When Mary Magdalene went to the tomb that early Sunday morning, she

expected to find Jesus' body and mourn the loss of this man whom they all loved. Not finding him where she expected was an utter shock. I can only imagine there was some fear and anger: "Who took him? Where did he go? How could someone do this?" Her words tumbled out to Peter and the disciple Jesus loved. They, too, were astounded to find his burial cloth and, though they believed, they did not understand what the empty tomb signified.

I can also imagine what they felt when they finally saw Jesus—surely relief and wonder, but there may have been a little anger that he had left them and fear for all that meant. Maybe that's how God feels about us when we wander away. We were lost, and God sent the prophets first and then his only Son to find us and lead us home. Out of love, Jesus gave his life and conquered death itself. In this Easter season, let us take great care neither to wander away nor to lose sight of the Lord. He is the source of our life. We belong to him. +

Sunday Readings

Acts 10:34a, 37-43

This man God raised (on) the third day and granted that he be visible ...to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance.

Colossians 3:1-4
or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8

When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory.

John 20:1-9

Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed.

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let us take great care
neither to wander away
nor to lose sight of the Lord.*

A Word from Pope Francis

The growing presence of women in the social, economic, and political life at local, national, and international levels, as well as the ecclesial, therefore, is a healthy process. Women have the full right to be actively included in all areas, and their right must be affirmed and protected, even through legal instruments wherever...necessary.

—Address to pontifical council, June 9, 2017



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do I keep my sights on the Lord all year, not just during Christmas and Easter?
- Do I take comfort that Jesus became human so that one day I may join him in his resurrection?

Being a Pest—for Good

By Alice Camille

“Here comes trouble!” If you think for a moment, you can probably recall the face of someone who earns this exclamation whenever he or she walks into the room. Sometimes we use this greeting aloud in fun, acknowledging a pal’s rowdy nature. But sometimes we employ these words as a mental note of desperation because the trouble is for real.

When Jesus tells the story of the persistent widow and the unjust judge (Luke 18:1–8), who do you think will be the troublemaker? The title some give to the parable—Parable of the Unjust Judge—suggests that the source of trouble is the mean old judge.

But traditionally, “troublemaker” was the name given to the woman—are we surprised?—because her insistence on justice makes her a pest in her society. She is sometimes called the importunate widow, the troublesome widow, the one who won’t go away until she gets what she wants. Never mind that what she wants is for justice to be done. She’s the one who’s considered the problem!

We all know this woman, of course. We may even be this person in the eyes of those who know us. The troublemaker is one who clamors for peace during war,



or one who speaks for the poor in an affluent society. Try “speaking for the trees” like Dr. Suess’ *The Lorax*, especially in logging territory, and discover what it means to be seen as a vexation that needs to be solved—or silenced!

These experiments in announcing unpopular truths help us to appreciate why prophets get martyred. Once you publicly acknowledge society’s problems, it won’t be long before you are identified as a problem yourself.

Pushing, Pushing

Seeing how the widow in the parable is traditionally described as troublesome, it’s interesting to consider how Jesus views her. Clearly the story is not about the judge and his response—which is rendered unwillingly in her favor just to get her off his back. The main character in the tale is the widow, and the focus is on what she does. She takes on the system that is cheating her and calls out for justice. Finally, the judge admits he’s scared of her and what she might do next! His heart hasn’t changed, but he reverses his decision to save his own skin.

The point of the story is that we are to model ourselves on the troublemaker. We are to persist in our faith and demand justice no matter how we are perceived

or even mistreated by powerful people and structures. It’s a bold vocation for the followers of Jesus: to be people who rock the boat that society is merrily sailing in. Are we up to it?

Uphill Climb

Naturally, if we disrupt business-as-usual and the American dreams of acquiring stuff, taking care of our own, saving for retirement without concern for today’s responsibilities, and always being correct about what’s best for the rest of the world, then we’re inviting a heap of trouble on our own heads. The more we persist in questioning the way things are, the more people we stand to offend. Who wants to be greeted everywhere as the troublemaker? Even in church we may find ourselves the source of conflict.

Perhaps this is why Jesus tells the story with such amusement, casting God as the heavy and the disciple as the troublemaker. Without a sense of humor, few people would get the irony of what happens to those who are whistle-blowers on society’s problems. So how about it: Wanna stir up some trouble? +

PRAYER

Lord, your resurrection pierces the darkness of doubt and fear. May the power of your resurrection help me to deepen my love for you and all people.

—From *Mindful Meditations for Every Day of Lent and Easter*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

April 22-27

Monday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 2:14, 22–33 / Mt 28:8–15

Tuesday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 2:36–41 / Jn 20:11–18

Wednesday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 3:1–10 / Lk 24:13–35

Thursday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 3:11–26 / Lk 24:35–48

Friday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 4:1–12 / Jn 21:1–14

Saturday, Octave of Easter:
Acts 4:13–21 / Mk 16:9–15

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