

## St Pius & St Anthony Homily Easter Sunday Year C (2025) Luke

TS Eliot describes something we all go through in life, in one of his great poem "The Four Quartets", He says "***We had the experience but missed the meaning***" (in Part 3-Dry Salvages). He's talking about what happens when we go thru things, but don't always grasp everything (all its dimensions) going on **at the time**. Later in the poem, (part 4-Little Gidding) Eliot adds, "***We shall not cease from exploration ... the end of all our exploring....Will be to arrive where we started....And know the place for the first time***". Back to it again, but for the first time! This occurs when things hit us, like out of the blue, and we say "Oh, that's what's behind that...." Or "Oh, that **is**, .....**what** he said....."

In our gospel reading, it is ***dawning*** on the women, and they are overcome by joy, Luke 24:8 says "they remembered his words." (HE DID TELL US THIS WOULD HAPPEN) The two shining men in dazzling robes help, (*angels-like the dazzling robe at Transfiguration-Lk 9:29*), saying 'Why seek the living among the dead ....**remember what He said**' (Luke 24:5). But the women are splendid for their part It took them going back to that tomb again--***revisiting it*** (*yes, the last time they were there it was trauma for them-Jesus' gruesome death- but they rise above the pain-how can you ever get "through" unless you go 'there' again*). So, the women revisit it, but now as blessed examples of disciples, they return to do just as Jesus would have them do (***answer a bad things happening with a good work going forward***) They are caring-respecting the dead (*I love our catholic tradition that talks about Spiritual work of mercy 'to honor the dead-pray for them-entrusting them fully to God' and the Corporal work of mercy of 'Burying the dead' laying them to rest*). As Jesus would have them do, these women are following the compassionate example of service Jesus set for them: Visiting tomb, to anoint-refresh His body (like washing-embalming today) with aromatic preservatives w/such a respectful act of tenderness. This is so much like Jesus Himself who visited death scenes - Think of Lazarus (John 11). Think of the daughter of Jairus (Lk 8:49-56). Think of the widow's only son at Nain (Luke 7:11-17). Jesus wanted to be there – yes, its a place of sadness, but He wanted love there, too. In Eliot's words, we return, to arrive where we started, **knowing it for first time**" (*if you like philosophy you can check out Paul Ricoeur's concept '2<sup>nd</sup> Naivete'-that occurs when you discover deeper meaning in something you've grown accustomed to-by revisiting it*). So, the women return to the tomb and Revelation strikes! He's alive. Extra light comes on, the tomb opens up a deeper dimension! (TS Eliot ends his 3<sup>rd</sup> part of poem Four Quartets with the line "***In my end is my beginning.***" These words are on his memorial epitaph at his burial site in East Coker-Somerset, England). Yes, this is resurrection-revisiting and discovering deeper meaning as if first time. We will see this repeated in the experience of two disciples on road to Emmaus (*very next story for Luke 24 in vss 13-35*) and in the scenes from John's gospel 20:19-29 Jesus appearing apostles (*1<sup>st</sup> time minus Thomas and then with Thomas*)---they were

there but not ready for the full realization-so, repeat it! Then “Oh yeah, now, it’s all coming into focus.”

Well, here, the women here discover the resurrection by returning in their experience and finding new, what Jesus really was saying and doing, the first time around! They remembered and followed through, and more came to them! (This is a pattern of discipleship- to find Jesus, **1)do as he did and 2)He will show up!**-again, see in those two disciples on road to Emmaus, like Jesus, they befriend a stranger-along the Way (don’t know it’s Jesus), they give shelter to homeless- Invite Him in, and feed the hungry-Bring Him to table, all things Jesus would have them do, and Jesus appears to them risen in what we call that 2<sup>nd</sup> Mass meal! So, Easter invites us to revisit our faith, and discover it again, for the first time- find new joy in it, to resurrect significance that had just been laying there before. Open it up and Discover the new life God had planted there long ago/. We thought we knew, but in faith God has more to birth in us, if we go through it again. That is resurrection. Discovering. The Joy that such seeking brings us – I bet we’ve seen some of this joy and seeking, already at how many Easter egg hunts that we have witnessed this previous week. I ask, “Why do we hunt for eggs at easter?” The joy of seeking and finding, of discovering, being surprised by a gift right there in front of us---newness in life, the promise of even more life to come. That is Easter!

As a kid, we loved the egg finding at grandma’s house before dinner, – and then we went back to the hunting grounds after dinner, because good helper always planted some **so good** that eggs went undiscovered the first time. Go look again, and sure enough up in a tree branch, or farther into the brush leaves of the bush, or even under the step of the porch, there was one more. But we kids even months later could rediscover the joy of that Easter seeking, when we would search out our easter baskets again after mom stored them in the top of the hall closet. Now this is back in the days of saving things from year to year, so we always received the same colored wicker basket (unique color for each son), and it had the same colored basket plastic grass. But how to get up to that shelf high above the hanging coats? We would ‘wall-walk’ it up, like you can do in a narrow hallway (like spider-man using your feet pressed straight against the wall opposite you, with your back stiff against the other wall, you could shimmy yourself up to the level of shelf- and we loved the joy (Yes it happened that as you dug your hand through the grass in the basket, discover a leftover little Reese peanut butter cup missed, or foil wrapped little chocolate egg drop, or definitely you could count on finding a spare jelly bean or two. Even after someone else had been through it, the grass must have been so thick as to always hide some stray candy to find again. (now walking up the wall -and suspended acrobatically there- meant that we didn’t have much time to dig around, as gravity did its job before too long!)

But, having been through the experience once, yes, we did miss something the first time. So return, and something new is always in store. That is what these women went through that first Easter morning! And it caught on as we see with Peter's following suit, after having been excitedly told about it. He can't wait to run back to the tomb and discover for himself, the deeper meaning of Jesus' resurrection. All just as Jesus had said before! It is only that for us, we have to come upon it ourselves. We discover with joy, that imitating Jesus-repeating His ministry, serving others, loving others, as He does, is what will bring His life to birth again in us. He told us, we just have to follow Him. Recall what those angels at the tomb said, "Why seek the living among the dead?" That is the living we have to do, (loving like Jesus) to find our way back from the dead. Jesus is alive, and He calls us to find Him in His Service!