

Thus, begins the story of Jesus' resurrection, the unexpected end to a very unexpected story. God in Jesus, born among humankind, who taught and healed out of a profound and gracious love, before being put to death on the cross, has been raised from the dead; raised to new life. This is the Easter miracle we celebrate today. And though it may seem "but an idle tale" it is true.

How do we know it is true? How did the women know that what they were told, "He is not here, but has risen," was true? The gospel is clear. It is because they remembered. They remember Jesus' words to them, how he would be betrayed, crucified, and then be raised on the third day. And now they see the truth of his words. They remember. And we remember, too.

This is a very particular kind of remembering. It is not just recalling facts, like we do for a test. Truly, God is not testing us here. It is a kind of remembering that requires an entering in. We join with these women at the tomb, see what they see, hear what they hear, feel all that they feel, and remember right alongside them. It is the kind of remembering we do each and every time we gather around the altar to share in the bread and wine, the very body and blood that is Jesus' presence among us. This remembering has a fancy name, anamnesis, but really, it is simply the remembering that enlivens our faith.

What did the women do with this remembering? The only thing that makes sense. They rushed to find the disciples to tell them what they had seen and heard. They bore witness to the great paschal mystery, the resurrection. We do the same each time we proclaim, "Alleluia, Christ is risen!" Knowing the truth of God's great act, we can't help it.

Of course, not everyone will believe. Some will hear only an idle tale. But for those who do, they know God's mighty power unleashed against the evils of the world. Remember, Jesus is put to death by the Roman Empire, which exercises its own power to protect its own authority. But this earthly power is no match for God's power. And so, the tomb where Jesus was laid so lovingly by his followers on Friday, is now empty. God has vanquished this innocent death by raising Jesus to new life. The evil of the world is overcome in favor of God's kingdom of love, justice, and peace.

We know the evils of the world only too well. We wonder when it will all end. But we don't need to wonder how it will end. We know, because we remember. Two thousand years ago the Son of God was raised from the dead. Death and evil no longer have any power over us. We remember; and when we do, we return all power back to God. Our despair turns to hope.

While the empty tomb seems the end of an extraordinary story, it is also the beginning of another story, ours. As Christians, trusting in God's power, we are called to witness and even participate in the way God is changing the world through God's infinite love and mercy for all of creation.

These are the promises we make in baptism as we join our lives to Christ and receive the promise of new and eternal life with God. Love God. Love your neighbor. Seek justice and peace.

Resurrection is an invitation to live as Jesus lived. Resurrection is the doorway to a life where meals are shared with enemies; healing is offered to everyone without judgment or qualification; and prophetic challenges are issued to the powerful. Resurrection means God's kingdom is already victorious. Life is already forever changed.

Despite all that is wrong in this world now, we can be confident God will act to right these wrongs. We can be confident because God has already acted. We simply need to remember, deeply and faithfully, to know the hope and promise of this truth.

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." And with this, our story begins anew.

Alleluia!