

## **A Prayer for Pastors on Easter**

*Dear Lord, I pray for all the pastors today  
Who will feel enormous pressure to have their sermon  
Match the greatness of the subject  
and will surely feel they have failed.  
(I pray even more for those who think they have succeeded.)*

*Help them to know that it is enough  
Simply and faithfully to tell the story  
Of women in dawn hush ...  
Of men running half-believing ...  
Of rolled stones and folded grave-clothes ...  
Of a supposed gardener saying the name of a crying woman ...  
Of sad walkers encountering a stranger on the road home ...  
Of an empty tomb and overflowing hearts.*

*Give them the wisdom to know that sincere humility and awe  
Surpass all homiletic flourish  
On this day of mysterious hope beyond all words.  
Make them less conscious of their responsibility to preach,  
And more confident of the Risen Christ  
Whose presence trumps all efforts to proclaim it.*

*Considering all the Easter choirs who will sing beautifully, and those who won't,  
And all the Easter prayers that will soar in faith, and those that will stumble and  
flounder,  
And all the Easter attendance numbers and offering numbers that will exceed  
expectations  
And those that will disappoint ...  
I pray they all will be surpassed by the simple joy  
Of women and men standing in the presence of women and men,*

*Daring to proclaim and echo the good news:  
Risen indeed! Alleluia!  
For death is not the last word.  
Violence is not the last word.  
Hate is not the last word.  
Money is not the last word.  
Intimidation is not the last word.  
Political power is not the last word.  
Condemnation is not the last word.  
Betrayal and failure are not the last word.  
No: each of them are left like rags in a tomb,  
And from that tomb,  
Arises Christ,  
Alive.*

*Help the preachers feel it,  
And if they don't feel it, help them  
Preach it anyway, allowing themselves  
To be the receivers as well as the bearers of the Easter  
News. Alleluia!*

*Brian McLaren*

