

Easter Message 2024

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Of all the Gospel accounts of the resurrection, Mark's is the briefest. There are no walks along the road, no breakfasts by the beach, no conversations with Jesus, no wounds to plunge our fingers into.

Easter Day begins early in the morning. The women disciples who have been with Jesus throughout the crucifixion, come to the tomb to anoint the dead body of their friend and teacher. They come in love without hope, not even sure how they will move the stone in front of the tomb.

The story is drenched with grief, death and betrayal. It does not turn away from the trauma of Jesus' death. It immerses us in the sorrow, despair and speechlessness of the women. In their heartache, they respond in fear and terror.

Nor does Mark avoid the failings of those around Jesus as he dies. Not Peter who denied knowing Jesus almost as soon as he'd finished boasting that he never would; nor Judas who betrayed Jesus for money; not the empire of Rome which used violence to enact their rule; nor the religious leaders who deny the new thing God is doing.

This story is for all of us, the broken, the grieving, the boastful, the enactors of violence and the victims of violence. For the broken humanity in each of us, the good news of resurrection life is proclaimed.

Mark's gospel ends abruptly with the announcement of resurrection and with fear and silence. And yet the story continued to be told, and continues with us.

In a world of violence, empire and groaning creation, God raises Jesus from the dead with the hope of new life, a gift of grace, love and mercy for each of us. A grace that cannot be defeated by empire or violence, not by grief or sorrow, not by our unfaithfulness.

God's resurrection grace keeps being offered to each of us over and over again, drawing us into awe filled silence for all that we have been given. Resurrection life invites us to respond to God's gift of grace with such joy at what God has done that it overflows into our worship, witness and service.

We live the Easter message each time we answer the call to discipleship. When we act with compassion towards each other and creation, in our seeking for justice for the world and living in love.

Dwelling in the heart of love that is God, may we live as Easter people who are being made whole because God raised Jesus from the dead.

Happy Easter.