

Pastor's Corner April 2020

When I read the Easter story in the Gospel of John, one thing that always strikes me is how Mary Magdalene, after all her confusion and upset over finding the tomb empty, after Peter and the other disciple have come to the tomb and gone back home, is still at the tomb. She won't leave until she knows what has happened. It's a component of grief, this unwillingness to let go.

She has lost the most important person in her life, the person who changed her so completely, the person who knew her and loved her unconditionally. She is in so much pain, so much sorrow, that she can't leave this now empty tomb. Why is it empty? She can't comprehend what had happened, but she won't leave until she can.

It's such a powerful moment. Mary lost in grief and sorrow and confusion. Death does that to us, it leaves us in such pain and sorrow and confusion. She seems so alone in that moment. But then, quietly, a man appears. Who is he? The gardener? So she asks this new person, where is my friend? Where is my hope? Where is my life?

The man, who had appeared so quietly, now simply says, "Mary". Her name. Her name! This man knows her name, and, suddenly, she knows. She sees him, and she knows him. He is Jesus! And he is alive! And she knows to be true what she had dare not believe could be true, that what Jesus had said about rising, and resurrection, and eternal life, was all so very, very real. He had spoken the truth, and now she was seeing that truth before her eyes. And again Jesus has changed her life, made her new, given her hope and joy.

But what made it all clear to her was him speaking her name. She knew, because she was known. Resurrection isn't

just about Jesus rising from the dead. Resurrection is about us being known, personally, intimately, by the one who has risen. The One who has conquered death knows each one of us, and he calls each one of us by name. the Life that has no end, the One who has promised eternal life and who now embodies that eternal life, knows us personally. And love us personally. And lives for us personally.

Easter is not just the promise that we shall be raised, it is the promise that you will be raised, and I will be raised. It is a personal promise as much as it is a collective promise. Life wins, yes. The God of Life defeats death, yes. The tomb is empty, yes. But that great victory is not just a victory for all of us, it is a victory for each one of us. The promise of Easter includes this good news, that the Risen One knows you, and calls you by name. He rises to meet you. He lives for you. He lives for each one of us, so that we can know live for each other. The community of faith the Risen Lord calls us to now embody is a community made up of individuals who are known personally by Jesus and who, now, in that knowledge, and in love, live together for the sake of one another, and for the sake of everyone in the world who is known personally by Jesus.

Resurrection life is life lived by each one of us together, each unique, wonderful one of us living with and for every other unique and wonderful child of God. Resurrection life, the life we live because, and only because, Jesus lives, is life rooted in being known by Jesus personally, and by each of us knowing every other one of us personally. We are called to live this new life together, for the good of every individual.

And it all begins in the fact that Jesus sees us, and knows us, and calls us by name, individually. Mary, Paul, you, all of you. Jesus speaks your name, loves you as you are, and bids you come, and live, and love, and serve, and be the

beloved child of God you have been made to be by God.
Together, we are Easter people in an Easter community. Let us
live and work and serve and love together as Resurrection
people, who are known and loved personally by the Risen Lord.

A Happy and Blessed Easter to you all!!!! See you in
church!

Peace,
Pr. Paul