

## **Sermon Outline for April 11, 2010: Easter II C**

**I said last week that Easter season would show us how the wonder of the empty tomb becomes the fullness of relationship with the Risen Christ.**

Hard to have a relationship with the empty tomb.  
The point of those stories is the absence of the Lord.  
It is great good news that "he is **not** here."  
He is not there among the dead.

**Imagine yourself called to the morgue to identify the body of one you love.**

Someone missing for some time.  
The coroner pulls back the sheet for you.  
And it is not her; it is not him.  
A wave of relief would roll over your body.  
"He is not here" in the morgue is some good news.  
And yet, it is only so much good news,  
if your loved one is still missing.

**So the absence of the Lord's dead body is only so much good news.**

It is the presence of his resurrected body that changes everything.  
Presence, not absence.  
It is relationship that we yearn for;  
It is a relationship with the Living God that saves us.  
Thus our story in the Upper Room.  
In a chamber of fear, where the disciples huddled in the fear of death and earthly power.  
Cut off from God by the death of Jesus.  
There he appears to draw them back to himself.

**We note that the marks of his death struggle have not been erased.**

Twice and quite willingly, he showed them his hands and his side.

Jesus' resurrection experience did not erase the hard reality of the cross.

This is the same Jesus; him crucified; him risen.

The exaltation of his Resurrection is continuous with his exaltation on the Cross.

The powers of sin and death are defeated in his death and in his new life.

### **It was through Jesus' death and his resurrection that our relationship with God was restored.**

So though we might forget the Cross for a moment in our Easter wonder;

The risen Lord reminds us of the fullness of his saving work, showing the disciples the marks of the nails and the spear.

The Lord present to them is the same Lord who preached and taught and suffered and died.

### **What does this mean for our Resurrection?**

The marks of the nails and spear may be bad news for us.

St. Paul says that through baptism, we have died a death like Christ's and will surely have a resurrection like his.

Does that mean we'll have all our scars, our artificial joints, the misshaped bits of our flesh in the general resurrection?

### **Who knows? I am sure that is not the point.**

But this may be; that as Christ's real physical personhood carried through from the Cross to this scene in the upper room,

So will yours.

Your body is not a soul container that will be discarded at your death.

You, all of you, will somehow endure, somehow hold together in the Resurrection.

**Perhaps some of the things you learned the hard way will endure.**

Some of the scars of your life, and not just the ones the surgeon left on you.

Some of the emotional pain and suffering of being human we may well carry with us into the Resurrection.

That is one difference between the Resurrection and some of the pie-in-the-sky alternatives that seek to replace it.

**But if we carry some scars in the Resurrection, they will be glorified as Christ's were.**

We'll hold those marks of our humanity up and say;  
Like Jesus, I am a real human being;  
And God took flesh and suffered and died and rose again for my sake.

And now in my body, I see God and share in his glory.

**If some of the marks endure, nonetheless we will know perfect peace.** What Jesus brings with him is peace.

In that Upper Room and in the Resurrection.  
Peace his objective announcement; the first words out of his mouth.

*Peace be with you.*

Quickly repeated after he showed them his hands and feet, those marks of the peace he made on the Cross.

And his first words again when he came to visit Thomas, to show him the scars as well.

**We are at peace, with God and one another, through the death and resurrection of Jesus.**