

**A Sermon Preached at The Church of the Resurrection
April 12, 2020
Easter Sunday
Matthew 29: 1-10**

You know what I want for Easter? I want a world, a world where things are put right, a world where people are not dying from a virus, a world where people are not risking their lives to help stop the spread of this virus, a world that is fair and just, a world where I can see the faces of the people that I love instead of looking into a camera.

I know this is not the Easter we planned or wanted. But God is here and present. I can feel it! There is beauty in the flowers, the lights, and the fact that I have a camera and technology to communicate through! Christ is risen from the dead and has drawn us together this morning in hope of overcoming the power of death, our sadness, our frustration. So, let's take a minute to take it all in. Enjoy it. But be careful. Take care not to miss it. And don't let it go.

While you take it all in, I am going to tell you a story. Once upon a time, a man heard about a beach that was covered in rocks, where one of those rocks, just one, would bring you eternal happiness - if you could find it. And you would know which rock it is, because if you held it, it will turn warm in your hand when all the other rocks just feel cold. So, the man sells everything he owns to get to that beach where, one by one, he begins to pick up the rocks. Time after time he is disappointed, because they are all cold in his hands.

After a few days he realizes, I must be picking up the same rocks. So, he devises a plan to test a rock in his hand, and if it is cold, he throws it far out into the ocean. So, for weeks on end, that man picks up a rock, feel if it is cold to the touch, and toss it into the sea. Hundreds of rocks, thousands of rocks. Cold, cold, and cold again. Until one day, he picks up a rock that looks pretty much like all the others. But, it turns warm in his hand! And before he could comprehend the miracle that is

occurring, his arm just sort of automatically tosses the rock out into the sea along with all the others.

He missed it. He missed his Easter moment! I don't want that for us. I don't want us to be so wrapped up in what we are missing this year or what we want in life, that we miss our Easter moment!

What presented itself to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary that first Easter morning in their encountering with the empty tomb, where a dead man should have been, but was not, was the incredible proposition that our lives, our often turbulent, awkward, surprising, and sometimes very joyful lives, are only part of a journey toward that which is eternal Resurrection!

So, think for a moment of a time when everything did feel just right, when we could hug each other, stand next to a friend, go to church together! Or think of how good it was when someone unexpected helped you in a time of pain. Or think of a

time when some relationship that was broken was healed and things were set to right. Think of a time of great joy. These moments when goodness and wholeness are apparent to us, become experiences of faith. It doesn't matter how brief or fleeting the moment, whether it was long ago or just the other day, whether it was a really spiritual experience or it seemed just plain natural or ordinary.

Think on a time when you felt wholly at peace, when things were well and as they should be, even as life with all its challenges, disappointments, and heartaches were spinning on all around you. That is an Easter moment, a resurrection moment, life in the midst of death, and a glimpse of things to come when death is no more. In moments like that, in moments like today, one could live forever, all because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.