

EASTER SUNDAY

Life happens in moments, and then is lived out in decades. The sun comes up each day. There are sunrises and sunsets that happen whether we notice them or not. Some days the sun is shrouded in clouds. Other days the night turns pink and then orange and finally the bright light of the sun is up and it is no longer night. Most of the time, you never even notice the sunrise. It just happens. Yet, think back to a vacation you had when you got up early to see the sun come up. What an amazing picture in your mind that you can recall clearly today. Or, maybe you remember the sunrise after a night of anguish or suffering and longed for the day to come, and it did. On another occasion it might have been an experience shared with someone you love and each day you see the sun come up you recall that first time together.

Yet, despite how wonderful those moments are, the sunrise lasts only a few minutes and then it is day. Life moves on. In a similar way, when we have experienced moments of joy or wonder or beauty they have the power to affect us, if we allow them to do so. They help us to see things in a new way. Perhaps the person you shared the sunrise with became your husband or wife and that has changed everything. Maybe the vacation you recall with fondness strengthened your family to handle later challenges.

Our scriptures trace for us this same mystery. Adam and Eve were created to be one with each other and one with God. They had everything they needed in the Garden of Eden, and yet they were not satisfied. So, they listened to Satan and ate of the fruit they were told not to eat. That moment they thought would give them such insight and freedom changed everything. However, they were not free, but slaves to sin and fear. Yet, God did not give up.

Later when the Israelites were oppressed in Egypt God heard their cry. But, their salvation came by walking into the midst of the sea that had dried up through the hand of Moses. All of the many years of oppression were over and now they were in the desert free. They danced and celebrated, but next would come forty years of journey from slavery into freedom in the Promised Land. A moment in time that needed a lifetime to understand.

Even Jesus' resurrection was like that. The Apostles had thought their Lord and Savior was gone for good. Jesus had died a terrible death on Friday and they were lost. Yet, now a woman comes with a tremendous story. The stone is rolled away, the tomb is empty, and the burial cloths are rolled up. It was a moment in human history unlike anything that has ever happened before or since. It took but an instant and yet no one saw it. Peter, John, Mary Magdalene, and the others would soon discover what this mystery meant, but it would take a lifetime to make sense of it.

What those first disciples began to understand is that if what their eyes had seen is true, namely that Jesus has been raised, then all of life will be different. It means that all Jesus taught and lived had ultimate value. It meant that living in the ways of the world would never satisfy any longer. Now, everything would be done "in Christ Jesus." Everything would be reflected from the lens that is Christ.

Knowing Christ and Him crucified means that suffering has purpose. It means that it is the path to everlasting life. Knowing Him means that living simply and sharing with the poor matters. It means that we are never alone in the world. We find His presence in a unique way in the Eucharist and in the other sacraments. We discover our hearts burning within us when we listen to the scriptures. We find Him in the poor and in everyone around us. We discover

that the promises we make in the world have ultimate value. We realize that we can and should live differently from those who still live in the world. We find that we don't really fit in. We can no longer pretend that Jesus is just a great guy, a teacher, or a role model. No, He is God with us. He is our savior. At least that is what awaits us when we say yes to what we have seen and heard. The resurrection was a moment in time. This Easter Day is a moment in time. Now, go live the rest of your lives with meaning and purpose. Let the power of the resurrection infuse everything you are and everything you do. Go and be different, and then make the world a different place. Christ is Risen, He is risen indeed!