

## **Willow River Parish: Clear Lake, Deer Park, and Faith Family**

### **Title: The life of Resurrection**

### **Lesson: Mark 16:1-8, NRSV**

*16 When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. <sup>2</sup> And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. <sup>3</sup> They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” <sup>4</sup> When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. <sup>5</sup> As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup> But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. <sup>7</sup> But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” <sup>8</sup> So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.*

Brothers and sisters in Christ, today is Happy Easter Day. This is the day the Lord resurrected. Beloved, do you believe in the resurrection of the Lord? Do you believe that the Lord is still alive? Do you believe the Lord is with you? And Do you believe the Lord is at work in your lives? Today is a happy day and a beautiful day.

What images do you think of when you think of Easter? Egg hunt? Flower cross? When Esther and I were in California, on Easter, we usually went to an American restaurant called Kick Back Jack and ate a veggie omelet and pancakes and a hash brown after church. I'm not sure Wisconsin has Kick Back Jack, but I know there is a great restaurant in Amery called Amery Family Restaurant, which offers a good pancakes. Last year, however, we had to skip it because it was right after Evan was born.

I know many people expect egg hunt on Easter. Imagine children laughing and looking for colorful eggs on green grass. Just thinking about it makes me so happy. As I was born and grew up in Korea, I couldn't experience the egg hunt on Easter because Korea doesn't have that tradition. Also, it is hard to find grass in Seoul; rather it is easy to find cement. When I googled about Easter, I used to see the image of egg hunt. And, after coming to California, I got to see it there in real life. It was very interesting and fascinating to see the children doing egg hunt on Easter in the American church. They looked so happy.

When I had served a Korean church, on Easter, I prepared Chocolate eggs called Kinder, which has a chocolate and a small toy. I hid them inside of the church building and children tried to find them. They liked the delicious chocolates and the toys. I remember they really liked the activity. I hope we will do that next Easter.

A Korean tradition on Easter is that people boil eggs and they put colored stickers on the eggs. After the worship service, they give each church member an egg and say "Happy Easter!" Talking about Easter eggs made me hungry. I should eat it after worship! Anyway, I like the American culture where people try to spend time with their families on Easter, so I know some church members went to other states now to be with their family, but the important thing is that we are in Zoom worship now to celebrate and worship the Lord together. Let's say Hallelujah!

Getting back to the first question, when you think of Easter, you may think and recall many images, thoughts, and precious memories that you have. Then, let me ask you one more question: What does Easter mean to you? What does the resurrection of Jesus Christ mean to you?

During the Wednesday Lent service, I once explained why Jesus had to be crucified on the cross. According to the Old Testament such as Exodus and Deuteronomy, when a person committed a sin, animal blood was needed in order to be forgiven by God. However, over time, the poor could not be forgiven for their sins because they had no money to

buy sacrifices, but the rich were forgiven for their sins by buying livestock easily through their power and money.

It was not the world the Lord wanted, and God, who loved all, sent his son Jesus to the earth to forgive and save the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the unforgivable of sin in this world. Again, Jesus came to earth to forgive our sins. So he died on the cross for our sins. However, he definitely said in the Bible that he would be raised on the third day after he was buried. Easter day is the third day since Jesus died on the cross two thousands years ago.

According to today's lesson (Mark 16:1-8, NRSV), when the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb worrying how they would roll the big stone from the entrance of the tomb. When they arrived there, however, they were surprised because the stone was already moved from the entrance. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. And he said, "Don't be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But, go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

Beloved, what lessons did you learn from today's scripture? Surely Jesus died on the cross, but why is his tomb empty?

When Easter is approaching, I often read the book "Resurrection I believe" written by thirteen Korean theologians, pastors, priests, and monks. According to one of the writings by Jae-Min Lee, the message that Jesus' empty tomb gives us is that the life of the resurrected is not in the tomb. In other words, the dead are in the tomb, but the resurrected are no longer in the tomb. Because Jesus was resurrected, the tomb was empty. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are deeply related to a

grain of wheat metaphor and the sacrament Jesus mentioned. At the last supper, Jesus gave thanks to the Lord, broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you." The broken bread means Jesus.

Just as Jesus Christ broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, he broke his life on the cross and gave it to all human beings. Imagine: He broke it and gave it to his disciples. Then, they received it and ate it. So, the bread went into their bodies and was absorbed by them. Like this, Jesus broke his body on the cross and gave it to us. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus went into our minds and our hearts and our souls and gave us new life, eternal life.

Galatians 2:20, NIV, reads "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Like this confession, the life before and after we embrace and believe in Jesus as our savior is totally different. Jesus died on the cross, but it's not that he died, it's that we died. Jesus gave us a new life and he lives in us.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has meaning to us when our lives are changed through him and born again in Christ. You may remember what happened when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist; the heaven was opened. This means that our dualistic thoughts were destroyed: heaven and earth, life and death, holy and secular, good and evil, and so on. And, they were transformed to new heaven, new earth, new being, and new life. Priest Jae-Min Lee tells that "The death of Jesus at the cross is not an event that happened at the end of his life, but an event that finally shows what happened in his life from the beginning to the end of his life."

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is mentioned and confessed in every part of the New Testament. His disciples, who denied him and fled for fear of death, came to believe in Christ and testified to the resurrection of Christ even when they were persecuted. Their testimonies and

confessions are described from the beginning to the end of the New Testament.

Mark 15:38 and Luke 23:45-46 describe that the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. (Mark 15:38, NRSV) This means all the boundaries between priests and ordinary people, holy and secular, God and human were destroyed. This also means all human beings can be before God and worship and praise God directly. After the curtain of the temple was torn in two, the centurion, who executed Jesus, became the first person to confess Jesus as Christ: "Truly this man was God's Son!" (Mark 15:39, NRSV) Again, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ destroyed all boundaries: Jews and Gentiles, Christians and Non-Christians, and led all to the eternal new life.

This is the meaning of the resurrection of Christ. Unfortunately, the life of resurrection is not just about believing and confessing to Jesus' resurrection. Just as Jesus Christ broke his life and gave it to all human beings, when we break our lives for others, our brothers and sisters in Christ and those who are socially oppressed, and marginalized, we can live a life of resurrection as His sons and daughters.

I bless all of you in the name of Christ, who gathered today to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and pray in the name of Christ that we can all live a life of resurrection. Amen.