

Easter Sunday  
April 20, 2025  
The Rev. Dr. Mark W. Frazier  
John 19:1-18

What God loves, God resurrects.

This is the proclamation of this singular, eternal day. The dawn comes and drives the tears of darkness away. As sunlight pours into the morning sky, so has the Son of God poured out his fullness, so that in the light of this impossible, wondrous moment, we might finally perceive the fullness of his life, ministry, and death.

Jesus, who is Love Incarnate, has been resurrected, or rather, he IS the resurrection! He had told a grieving sisters Mary and Martha that he was the Resurrection and the life, and so now Love in human, the Resurrection, stands before us, not as some victorious singular hero, but as Love incarnate reshaping all creation and allowing us to discover that we are God's beloved and that what God loves is resurrected.

It was not always so easy to tell that this would be the case.

The universe has traveled a long way to get to this morning. Bursting from the holy origin, the creative tension between chaos and genesis creates all that we know and sense, spreading outward from the Word of God, the Son, the Christ, the one we know as Jesus. As we humans have traveled the journey of history, humanity has sought the one thing we could never find for ourselves: a solution to the seemingly fragile, tenuous union of the

material and the eternal, of flesh and spirit. The truth that haunts us with a persistent dread is that what we love... dies.

This has been the curse, bitter fruit of inescapable insight: that even if our love—love for God, for neighbor, for earth, for self—if love somehow manages to endure, our bodies and the work of our hands do not. We are burdened with the degradation of even our loftiest achievements, our most precious attachments. The inescapable presence of death has relentlessly burdened humanity with grief, desperate with the longing for something other than a final goodbye.

But today, in the strange and glorious light of Easter morning, a miracle takes place, and not just the one you are thinking of.

No, the first miracle is this: that a disciple, a female disciple, Mary Magdalene, carrying the vast pain of all creation in her heart, comes to the tomb of God, the graveside of all hope, and looks into the void... and yet she refuses to yield her love to it. She refuses, in that place, despite the death of Love itself, to give up the love she carries. She keeps that love alive in her broken heart. And so, on behalf of all of us, she comes to bear witness and to tend to Christ's broken body when no one else is able or willing to do so. She knows that bearing witness and caring for what is broken is what love looks like, both in life and in death.

And then, in this moment of miraculous tenderness and strength, she beholds a new miracle:

What God loves God resurrects.

Mary did not resurrect Jesus, only the power of the almighty and eternal creator could do such a thing—but it is also true that the love of the God coursed through her veins and guided her to the tomb that day. It was God's love, it was God's own heart, in and with and through the heart of Mary Magdalene, who also wept beside the empty tomb, God weeping with her and with us for the pain of separation, weeping for the fallenness of the human race, longing for a perfect union of flesh and spirit. The God of all creation is with Mary and with us as we gaze at the tomb.

And so, while Mary did not resurrect Jesus, we can say that she carried that resurrecting love within herself, that she was an agent, a minister, of love's surprising, life-giving force. In that moment she participated in the very power that will restore all life back to its source. And if she does, then so can we.

What we must learn and proclaim is this: the Resurrection of Jesus is not some ancient story in a faraway place, it is a statement about what is true for you and for me and for everyone who is still in search of something other than "goodbye." For everyone who struggles to love; for everyone who has loved and lost; for everyone who feels confused about what love even is: Easter Day is the answer.

What God loves, God resurrects

Those we love, however imperfectly, for however long, are resurrected.

Where true love is, God is present.

This is what the risen body of Christ shows us and empowers us: that what is loved is not lost to you, and it will live forever, not only as a memory, but in its actual fullness.

And, as Mary discovered, what you choose to love in this world is imbued with eternity by the very act of loving it. Every time you have gently kissed a soft cheek or held a calloused hand. Every time you have refused to disparage the less fortunate or trample a fragile spirit. Every time you have encouraged the hope of the poor, or sought beauty, or made peace. Every time you have done these things, you have partaken in the ultimate resurrection of the world, for what is loved—by you, by God, by God working through you—is resurrected.

Why and how is this so? How can Easter be what it is?

We humans cannot explain Easter or Resurrection. But here we are. And we need not explain it. Because neither can we really explain our impulse to love, even in the face of loss and uncertainty, and yet we simply do. Love is its own answer. And resurrection is the same.

God is the Love that resurrects. Jesus emerges from the long dark night, calling Mary by name, calling you by name, to confirm what you already knew in your heart but dared not trust: that love is worth the cost, it is worth having to say goodbye, because there is indeed, something other

than goodbye at the end of the story, some place where beginnings and endings meet, where, forever, when light finally overcomes darkness. So, the good news of Easter, that what God loves is also resurrected, means that our task on this day and every day is like unto Mary's. We must go out into the world, to the gravesides and the gardens and those places where they meet, with the intention of finding the miraculous, and of allowing ourselves to be miracles too—miracles of love in human form. Like Mary, we are called to refuse to yield to despair, even as we grieve.

We follow Jesus in his way of Love that bears witness and tends to what is broken, even if we fear, sometimes, that all is lost. The sort of love that chooses to do so anyway.

And as we do, it is possible that a strange thing will happen, that a strange new Easter light will flood our vision. We begin to notice others around us choosing to do the same thing—to love with persistence. We notice all of the small gestures of care that keep the world going, all the hidden sacrifices that have allowed generations to endure and flourish despite hardship and disappointment and violence. We will notice how there is, in fact, something deeper than just human longing that propels us through all the dangers, toils and snares of life.

Choosing the way of Love leads us to seek, to hope, to dream, and to know that these are not futile endeavors—they are fertile ones. Like Mary in the garden, our determination to love is the embodiment of the very same mysterious force that compels life to spring forth from the creation.

For what God loves is resurrected.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!