

A couple weeks ago, Sarah and I, along with our dog, Zoey, traveled to Acadia National Park in Maine. Acadia is, actually, one of the smallest national parks in this beautiful country of ours that we often take for granted, but it remains one of the most popular of all with an estimated 3.5 million people who made the trip there last year alone. Its selling point is having a front-row seat to the Atlantic Ocean, with a path you can walk alongside, ending up at this cliff with these massive rocks you can traverse to get a closer sight and sound to the waves that crash upon the shore.

Now most of the nights we were there, we would get our dinner and make the trek down to the southern end of the island that Acadia calls home; and Sarah, being much more the professional photographer than myself, would take pictures surrounding a lighthouse or off a beach we found nearby as the sun set in the distant sky. However, the first night we did this, we realized, soon enough, that the cell-phone internet signal was diddly-squat, when we wanted to type in the address where we were staying and find our way back on this island we knew next to nothing about. Instead, we had to resort to the tried and true art of a paper map to

find just the right roads through the darkness that took over once the sun had fully descended from the horizon.

And each time we ventured back, we would pass by this small lake in comparison to the behemoth of the Atlantic nearby. It was called, Echo Lake; evidently one of the top spots to go for swimming during the summer months, as it is a freshwater option in comparison to the saltiness of the ocean. For us, however, it was nothing more than a precious sight to be captivated with when we drove by those evening hours. The moon had taken over the sky from the sun, and when its pure light hit that water, I'm not sure I have the words to describe it. It was eerie, yet tranquil. It was serene, yet mystifying.

Evidently, the Scripture has its way of trying to convince us that the Creation has a voice; that even in the Psalm this morning: the sun, the moon, the stars can, somehow, praise God themselves. For us human creatures, we struggle knowing how the natural surroundings pull it off, exactly. Is God speaking through the crashing waves, reminding us of the horror that is still done amongst our humanity that God is not overly thrilled with, to say the least? Is God speaking through the sunset, trying to

convince us to seek rest and renewal for the next day's work in loving and serving God and our neighbor? What could God be saying through a moonlight revealing a different array of shaded colors from a small lake? How could that moon fulfill the Psalmist's plea that it praise God that very night?

Let's just say there weren't many other drivers on the road we were taking during those night hours. Most people tend to scope out natural wonders with the *sun*'s help in the sky before moving indoors for the night. We want to see beauty more so in those moments. We remember the words from another Psalmist that joy comes in the morning, after all. Except the Creation doesn't sleep so much. Maybe some animals do, including the dog we drug all over the place, but the rest remains alive, as if the praising of God can be pulled off all hours of the day and night.

The moon unleashed its not-so-subtle reminder to take a look at what was called Echo Lake. Come to think of it, that is our calling as disciples of Christ: to echo the very words that were brought to life by a man who spent the most pivotal years of our collective human life around a relatively small sea of Galilee. We are to echo his words of hope, love,

compassion, humility, a relentless dedication to all children of God throughout a lifetime.

Yes, we do need some rest along the way. We are not wired to pull it off all hours of the day and night. Only God can do that, and, in its own beautiful way, the Creation follows the divine suit. But even when we rest, even we need a break from it all, whether that be beside waters or in the midst of trees or in our own living room, the echo of the Holy Spirit is still reverberating strong within our heart, a reminder that God never sleeps on us: on our joys or cries on anything in between.

However, that light reflecting off the moon into the darkness, served as another divine reminder: no matter how sad we may feel, no matter how much we are convinced darkness has taken over our day-to-day life; God still insists the divine light burst through onto our very shores. It's not gonna stop there, either: God stubbornly insists that the very light of Jesus Christ reflect off us onto other shores, onto other lives, onto other people just passing by; that they never forget that Christ is still Risen for them, too, for all of God's children now and forevermore. And for that Greatest News of all, we give thanks to God indeed! Amen.