

God's Encircling Yes

Sunrise Service, Easter 2022

John's gospel begins the Easter Story with the words: "Now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark.

Easter begins, as with us today, in more than one sense of the word, in the dark before the dawn. And it began with Mary Magdalene. She was the first one here. All the gospels say that it was the women who came first to the tomb. I saw one blurb: "In order to be doctrinally correct, only women are allowed, at the Eater Sunrise Service."

Love had brought Mary there. And Mary was the first teller, first evangelist of the good news of Eater. That is why the early church gave her the title "Apostle to the Apostles."

That is why I always want a woman to read the Easter Gospel text at the Easter service. They were the first to tell the story.

Easter Sunrise services are powerful because the sun itself announces the good news to all the earth. It announces what I call "God's Encircling Yes", a Yes that encompasses the whole world.

Creation itself announces God's Yes to all. God made this world, blessed it and called it good. God made us, blessed us and called us good—true despite what dreary theological systems have said about “original sin”. We were born in “Original Goodness” and “Original Blessing!”

The poet e.e.cummings wrote of this manifold gift of life in these words:

i thank you God for most this amazing
 day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
 and a blue true dream of sky, and for everything
 which is natural, which is infinite which is yes....

Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote of us human creatures and the Resurrection:

In a flash, at a trumpet crash
 I am at once what Christ is,
 since he was what I am, and
 This Jack, joke, poor potsherd...
 Is immortal diamond.

Here is God's Yes to us today in Creation and in the Resurrection.

There a passage I love in II Corinthians, as Paul writes:

For the Son of God, Jesus Christ
 whom we preached to you

is not yes and no, but in him
it is always yes.

This is the gospel of God at Easter, God's encircling Yes.

Too often in life we experience a lot of confusing conditional and conditioned yeses: *Yes and no, yes but, yes, if.*

But in God, in Christ, it is always Yes. No mixed messages that turn us into walking neurotics, we, anxious any yes might suddenly be withdrawn.

The church turns the good news, the *euangelion*, into the bad news, the *mal-angelion*, when it turns God's Yes into a *Yes and No*, a *Yes, But*, a *Yes, If*.

Easter is God's always, unconditional and unconditioned Yes. Paul then says: "All the promises of God find their yes in Jesus Christ."

That's God's promises to you too.

Can you believe this good news? Can you believe how good it is? Can you believe it is for you too?

Paul ends by saying that Christ is not only God's Yes, but that "through him we utter our Amen to the glory of God."

Would you, this early Easter morning, add your Amen? From a down deep place in you?

