

NOTRE DAME PARISH

3rd Sunday of Easter

Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.



The deeper issue did not lie with the meal but with the quality of the vision experience. Jesus appeared as a living, solid form. This would have a great impact on the spirituality of Christianity. The holy could be found in the tangible. Holiness was not only a matter of ecstasy, touching the transcendent, while

leaving the world behind. No, God reached his people through his creation, not in spite of it. This insight became the foundation of the Church's self-awareness as the Body of Christ. It also grounded the worship in the Church as sacramental. The believer could encounter the Risen Christ through the bodily senses.

MASS INTENTIONS

- Saturday, April 17 @ 4PM
Frank Parkerson
- Sunday, April 18 @ 9:30AM
Frank Flanagan
- Monday, April 19 @ 8AM
Szostak, Martonisi, Kazwara Families
- Tuesday, April 20 @ 8AM
Mary Ann Merrion
- Wednesday, April 21 @ 8:30AM
Kerry Malinski
- Thursday, April 22 @ 8:30AM
Gloria Godfrey
Ruth Byrd
- Friday, April 23 @ 8AM
Frank Parkerson
- Saturday, April 24 @ 4PM
Frank Parkerson
Hyland Nolan

Oremus – Let Us Pray

- For Megan Anyanwu, to be baptized this weekend
- For peace and justice in pending court cases concerning race and law enforcement
- For victims of the mass shooting in Indianapolis
- For reasonable restraints on gun ownership
- For the success of the 2021 CSA campaign in our parish
- For the long-term effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines
- For the sick of our parish and families, especially the chronically ill and their caregivers

Preaching to Myself

A seminary professor once told my class that when we preach, we are actually preaching to one's self. For a priest or deacon dutifully preparing a homily, the process can be both an examination of conscience and an act of prayer.

In the pre-Vatican II Church (before 1965), preaching was rare, disconnected from both scripture and daily life, and regarded as unnecessary. Holy Communion was all that mattered. If a priest chose to give a sermon, it was often taken from a manual of sermons on moral issues and virtues.

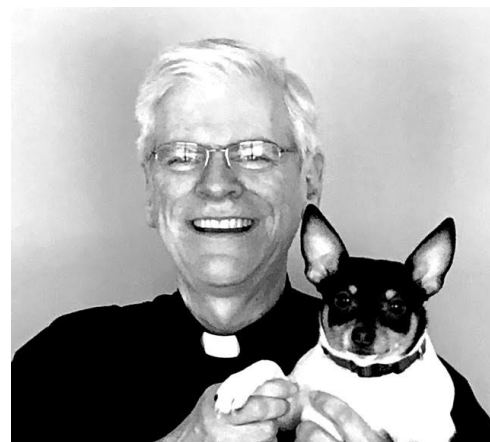
That is why many parishes looked forward to an annual "mission" series of talks given by outside priests or religious. These men were usually more skilled, but even then scripture

rarely was the centerpiece.

The centrality of scripture in Catholic life and faith had faded away in the late middle ages because of poor priestly formation and the continuing dominance of Latin – no longer understood – at the Mass.

The Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation were largely focused on the role of scripture in Christian life. The Bible – God's Word – came to dominate Protestant Christianity; ritual worship was less important. In light of various movements and heretical sects that often arose from misinterpreting scripture, Catholic bishops continued to fear private or individual reading of the Bible.

Vatican II occasioned a rebirth of the Bible in our Catholic



tradition. Scripture reading is now strongly encouraged. But a sound, approved guide to the Bible remains important.

Occasionally I hear Catholics – even priests or deacons--voice fundamentalistic interpretations of the Bible.

That's why, when preparing a homily, I must study and "preach to myself."

Father Keith & Rocco

The Courageous Heart

By Beth Richardson



In the days after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, his disciples struggled to make sense of the events that had happened. While Jesus appeared to the women and to the disciples on the Emmaus road, other disciples gathered in fear behind bolted doors.

I can imagine that I would have been among the group cowering behind locked doors. And, like the skeptical Thomas, I would have needed proof to believe the outlandish stories. How could the disciples go on after such a devastating loss? And how could they have the courage to proclaim Jesus' resurrection when

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Nothing wonderful in this life will be lost in the resurrection

by the Reverend Terrance Klein

Like many before and since, the German Romantic poet Heinrich Heine had great difficulty accepting the death of his father Samson. As a child, Heine had greatly admired, even adored, his father, but his career as a writer had led him far from home. It was weeks after his father's death when Heinrich could finally return.

In his biography *Heinrich Heine: Writing the Revolution* (2020) – part of the tremendous Jewish Lives Series from Yale University Press – George Prochnik links the strong sorrow the poet experienced to his neglect of his father's twilight years: "Though Samson had been fading for years and Heine's visits home were rare, the news struck him a body blow. Decades later he told a friend that he simply couldn't absorb the loss."

The poet spurned the condolences typical of the time, drawing a very domestic image of his father.

"Yes, yes, they talk about seeing him again in transfigured form," he wrote, of his late father.

"What use is that to me? I know him in his old brown frock-coat, and that is how I want to see him again. That's how he sat at the table, salt-cellar and pepper-pot in front of him, one on the right and the other on the left, and if the pepper-pot happened to be on the right and the salt-cellar on the left, he turned them round again. I know him in his brown frock-coat, and that's how I want to see him again."

Mr. Prochnik concludes, "The blunt home truth of his lament negates the grandeur of the church's promised resurrection."

Perhaps it would be fairer to say "of resurrection as popularly pictured in the early 19th century." Heine found little comfort in picturing his father as an ethereal presence in the clouds. That seemed a loss compared to his father presiding at the family table in his old brown frock coat.

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Pendulums swing in their ceaseless search for balance. How we grapple with death does as well. Reading Facebook posts and even published obituaries, one searches for some hint of a transcendent life after death, as mourners describe their loved ones playing poker, enjoying Johnnie Walker, fishing and golfing. The image of heaven drawn by so many of our contemporaries is essentially the medieval picture of limbo. The dead endlessly pursue their earthly delights.

But shouldn't someone ask the same question that buried that theory? Can the pleasures of this life alone make us happy, blessed for all eternity? Isn't there a transcendence in the human spirit, which would grow weary of nothing more than endless entertainment?

We could debate the question, but all that we know of heaven we learn from the resurrection accounts of Jesus. On one hand, St. Luke would side with Heine in his rejection of misty, harp-haunted clouds. Luke records:

They gave him a piece of baked fish;

he took it and ate it in front of them (24:42-43).

Jesus is no ghost. More than just his spirit makes itself known to his disciples. No, he joins them in the earthly intimacy of eating. Here the Facebook theologians are correct. Nothing wonderful in this life will be lost in the resurrection. Certainly, intimacy and the honest pleasures of the flesh will not

fade away.

Yet St. Luke also wants us to understand that resurrection proclaims a transcendence, a transformation we cannot even imagine. The evangelist makes this clear in the manner in which Jesus abruptly appears to his disciples. They do not see him approaching from a distance. There is no knock at the door. Resurrection is not ruled by time or space. Life after death is more than a continuation of what went before.

While they were still speaking about this,

he stood in their midst and said to them,

"Peace be with you."

But they were startled and terrified

and thought that they were seeing a ghost (24:36-37).

So, how does one imagine a heaven where Solomon Heine still presides over the family table in his now splendiferous old brown frock coat? How is heaven a true blossoming of human life rather than something of an endless, melancholy viewing of a family home movie?

There is the difficulty. We simply cannot imagine how realities born in time and space blossom, move beyond both time and space. I could employ a cliché and say that we haven't got a clue, but that isn't true. We lack the imaginations to fashion the picture, but we do have a clue: It's the resurrection of Jesus.+

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the story was so unbelievable?

So much was happening in and around the disciples in the aftermath of Jesus' death. Though we see their fear, we also see their resilience. In our society today, there is a lot of talk about resilience – the ability to recover from difficulty. A common characteristic of a resilient person or entity is the ability to face one's fears. In my understanding, this characteristic is courage. "Courage. From the Latin, *cor*, which means 'heart.'"

These disciples of Jesus practiced resilience and courage when they overcame their fears, trusted, and followed the Risen Christ. Our spiritual ancestors, they modeled courage for us. They formed a community of love that survived persecution of their movement by the Roman authorities. Perhaps the words of Jesus echoing in their spirits enabled this faithful endurance.

Jesus said in the Gospel of John, "Take courage, I have conquered the world!" And part of me wonders ... Where are you, Jesus? And where is the evidence of your victory over death?

In recent weeks, we have watched, with hopeful hearts, the beginning of the end of the global pandemic of COVID-19. But as hope rose, our spirits were flattened by news in the U.S. of mass shootings and an increase in cases of the virus. What does the courage that John describes look like amidst a relentless litany of suffering?

Courage shows up in many creative and often unassuming ways. We have seen so much courage in the world during this past year. The courage of health care workers who went to work every day facing the unknown perils of a new virus, working, often, without adequate protective equipment. The courage of prophets speaking truth to the injustices of the world. The courage of parents who took on the

schooling of their children and teachers who learned to reach out to students using new technologies. The courage of people with Asian features venturing out into a hostile world. The courage of those who suddenly find themselves without jobs or places to live. The courage of those living in isolation getting up each day and continuing to live.

Courage isn't always daring action, like entering a burning building. Sometimes a courageous deed is as simple as leaving the house to drive to the grocery store; logging onto Zoom for the first time; saying to someone else, "I need help."

John Mogabgab wrote in *Weavings*, "Jesus embodies the fullness and freedom of a courageous heart, a heart in which love has displaced fear." This is the essence of courage – that we would open our fearful hearts to the Holy One. That we would trust in the power of God to replace our fears.

Courage is believing that Christ has conquered the world despite all the evidence to the contrary. Mogabgab asks, "How can we live courageously in the midst of such distress? ... Through participation in the heart of Christ." May we live with the heart of Christ – Christ's courage – beating inside each of us. Filling us with love, hope, trust, and courage.

This article appeared on The Upper Room blog, April 21, 2021.

2021 CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL
Notre Dame Parish Goal: \$37,796
YTD: \$1855



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