



PIER REVIEW

THE MINISTRY JOURNAL OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. LUKE, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

The Resurrection Happened. Period.

By The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu

I ONLY HAVE ONE SERMON AT EASTER TIME, and there isn't much to it. Here it is: the Resurrection happened. Period.

Not that there isn't a lot more that could be said. The point of my "sermon" is to state the *fact* of the Resurrection. The man Jesus, who was crucified, rose. Period. All the commentary in the world is nothing in comparison.

My main stalling technique for turning this into an actual sermon is to mention what the Resurrection is *not*. It is *not* a happy ending tacked onto a sad (fictitious) story thus giving it a moral or symbolic meaning. It is *not* a metaphor for the *rebirth* of nature that happens at springtime. If anything, springtime is a symbol of God's New Creation of heaven and earth that was certified by the Lord's Resurrection.

Modern Christians are often embarrassed by the Resurrection. Miracles and modernity don't mix. Hence the only place for a Resurrection

story would be just that—as a story, myth or legend with some sort of practical application.

According to the modern view, "The Lord is risen" is just another way of saying, "Think positively" or "Have a nice day!" Better still: "Every cloud has a silver lining."

But what makes us so sure every cloud has a silver lining? For that matter, why should we think positively—other than to make ourselves feel good as we slide gradually into oblivion?

The philosophy of modernity is as old as humanity: "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Period.

It is only because Jesus did *in fact*—physically, historically—rise from the dead that we can think positively, unless we just happen to find ourselves in a good mood. Only because Jesus really rose do we have any basis for saying, "Every cloud has a silver lining."

Christianity without a historical Resurrection is another name for wishful thinking. No wonder Easter bunnies and Easter baskets have become popular in recent years. At least there's something to them! If the Resurrection didn't happen, then there's no Christian gospel.

The fact of the Resurrection changes all other facts. It reveals everything and everybody from a new perspective. This is where preaching begins.

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Dean Tony Clark processes out via the center aisle at the conclusion of the Sunday Eucharist.

The Resurrection Punch

By The Very Rev. Anthony P. Clark

*Alleluia. Christ is risen.
The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.*

THIS ANCIENT DECLARATION WILL OPEN OUR worship from the Great Vigil of Easter through Pentecost Sunday. After the excitement of Easter Sunday has worn off, we will likely offer this versicle and response with little enthusiasm as we return to “normal” Sunday worship.

We will go through the motions because, unfortunately, many Christians in the 21st century have forgotten the provocative dimension of this opening acclamation for the Easter season. We go through the motions because we do not feel the punch of the question and answer session at the empty tomb: “Why are you looking in a tomb for someone who is alive? He isn’t here! He has risen from the dead!” (Luke 24:5b, 6a *NLT*)

As Bishop N. T. Wright of Durham, England suggests in *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*, first century Greco-Roman pagans would have felt the punch. According to Wright, “As far as the ancient pagan world was concerned, the road to the underworld ran only one way. Death was all powerful; one could neither escape it in the first place nor break its power once it had come.”¹

For the Romans and Greeks, death meant a shadowy, ghostly, disembodied existence in the Hades, and it never offered life on the other side of that underworld. For the Greco-Roman pagan, “He has risen from the dead!”—resurrection—*meant* a new bodily life. There were other ways to say that a spirit from the underworld had been spotted. “He has risen from the dead” was not one of them. For the Greco-Roman pagan, resurrection meant the ultimate “Great Escape”—a physical and tangible return from the shadows of the underworld.

Wright puts the Jewish doctrine of Resurrection in perspective. “Most of the Jews of the day believed in an

eventual resurrection—that is, that God would look after the soul after death until, *at the last day* God would give his people new bodies when he judged and remade the world. That is what Martha assumed Jesus was talking about in their conversation beside the tomb of Lazarus: “I know he will rise in the resurrection *on the last day*” [emphasis added].²

Admittedly, the early Church’s talk of resurrection would not have shocked the Jews. The timing of Jesus’ resurrection “in the present age” is what packed the punch.

For the Jews, “He has risen from the dead!” redefined resurrection from a distant future event to “something that...happen[ed] to one person ahead of everybody else.”³ Yes, the General Resurrection would still occur sometime in the future, but through Jesus’ death and resurrection, the Kingdom of God had been inaugurated in our midst. The New Creation had begun. As Aslan proclaims in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, “Death itself is working backward.”

Hear the word of God: “Why are you looking in a tomb for someone who is alive? He isn’t here! He has risen from the dead!” Hear the poetry of our liturgy: “Alleluia. Christ is risen. / The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!” Hear with ancient ears this Easter season. Listen with the ears of the ancient Greek or Jew and feel the remarkable *punch* of the Church’s central teaching: “Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and **he was raised from the dead on the third day**, as the Scriptures said.” (1 Corinthians 15:3b, 4, *NLT*) PR

¹ HarperCollins, New York, 2008, p. 35

² p. 37 ³ p. 39

How Do You Spell Relief?



Father Dick Grant and Paul Kennedy smile for the camera during a meeting of the Men's Group.

By The Rev. Richard E. Grant

A FEW YEARS AGO THE CHURCH AD PROJECT produced a number of picture poster ads designed to jab people into thinking about their relationships to God/Jesus/Church. One such picture was of a child's Easter basket filled with jellybeans with the caption, "Does Easter mean beans to your kids?" And I suspect that it does, along with Spring Break, chocolate eggs, and the return of *Alleluias*. For many kids, Lent is just a confusing, dark stretch of time between New Year's and Easter.

For the adults, I think a similar picture of two Alka-Seltzer tablets with the caption, "Does Easter Mean 'Relief' to You?" would be equally true. For many adults Easter means relief from forty days of "giving something up" (never a serious period of self-denial or discipline). It means particular relief from the intensity of Holy Week. The dark days of the cleansing of the Temple, the confrontations, the agonizing prayer at Gethsemane, the bloody sweat, the embarrassing sleepy disciples, the betrayal and arrest, the illegal trial and conviction, the pusillanimous Pilate, the horrible flogging and mocking, the crown of thorns, the bloodthirsty crowd, the staggering weight of the cross, the spikes, the searing pain, the taunting of the Pharisees, the loneliness on a cross, the thirst, the apparent complaint "why hast Thou forsaken me?" and, finally, the death of an innocent man—all this brings us to emotional overload.

Come on, Easter, bring me some relief!

We secretly wonder if there isn't some other way to do this? We think, "The kids get enough violence and bloodshed without the Church providing more. Let's tone it down. Can't we just say that some mean people did manage to kill Jesus, but because God wanted him alive, He was able to fix it? After all, since God can do

anything He wants to do, raising Jesus is no big deal... right?" *Wrong!*

What's missing in that simplistic equation is *me!*

What does all that awful business of crucifixion have to do with me if all I do is watch from a distance and am relieved when we stop talking about it?

It takes a long time for many, maybe most, to connect the dots. We must begin with acknowledging ourselves as heirs of the sin of Adam. We are sinful by nature if not by intent. The penalty for sin is death.

Jesus, God's only Son, lay down His glory and took upon Himself our flesh and our sin. He knew the consequence. He calls us to enter into this by taking up our crosses and following Him. At this point, most of us (like the disciples) fall asleep, or watch from a distance as Jesus bears our sinful human nature to Golgotha where He and it are put to death to pay the penalty for sin.

At first it would seem that death is the penalty that even Jesus can't trump. Except for the Resurrection! Jesus defeats death!

So what is the big deal about the Resurrection? The Resurrection is not that God did a nice thing for Jesus. He did it for *us!*

Alleluia! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! And with Him and in Him, so am I!

No wonder I feel relief!

PR

Does Easter mean beans to your kids?

If you agree that Easter should do more for your children than raise their blood sugar level, we invite you and your family to experience the true miracle of Easter in our church.



"Does Easter mean beans to your kids?"
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The Church Ad Project.
www.churchad.com



Deacon Christine Maddux with one of her companions through life's journey, her Cooper Mini.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR CONFIDENTIAL,
COMPASSIONATE HELP TOWARD ABORTION RECOVERY

Cathedral Pastoral Care Team (407) 849-0680

Inner Healing prayer, Deacon Carolyn Peterson

Sacrament of Reconciliation, Canon Gary L'Hommedieu

Theophostic Prayer Ministry, Fr. Dick and Amy Grant (407) 896-7099

Reveille Ministries Bible-based abortion recovery counseling,
(407) 333-0404 or www.callforhope.org

Cross

Choosing Abundant Life

By The Rev. Christine L. Maddux

A FEW MONTHS AGO I DECIDED TO ACCESSORIZE my Mini Cooper with a custom license plate. Little did I know how the Lord would use this seemingly trivial whim to lead me down a new ministry path.

I searched the online license plate gallery for something that would complement my car, and was pleased to find one that not only fit my color scheme, but had a good message besides: Support Education. An obvious winner! But en route to the license plate bureau, my mind wandered to something that had been pricking my conscience increasingly in recent months: the cultural acceptance of abortion as an ordinary option. When I stepped up to the license plate counter, I requested a "Choose Life" plate instead, much to my own surprise. But that was not the end of the surprise.

In the ensuing weeks God began to open up the concept of "Choose Life" in ways I did not expect. He showed me that it is not just an abortion consideration that involves choosing life, but all the sundry choices I make day by day. I could choose to give a life-giving correction to my son, instead of a harsh one. I could choose to give life to my household, or be dreary. I could choose to ignore the culture of death that surrounds us, or I could stand against it. I could choose to share what I knew about the Way, the Truth and *the Life*, or I could keep it to myself. Christ's words, "I came that they might have *life*, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10 RSV) echoed repeatedly in my mind. So did, "Where is this going, Lord?"

He has not given me the full answer to that question. But He has brought me to a new understanding of what "choose life" means, including its meaning within the context of abortion. There is a life choice to be made even after an abortion: those who have experienced abortion need compassionate help to choose life in the aftermath. Left unresolved, post-abortion effects commonly manifest in life-eroding symptoms such as depression, anger, anxiety, substance abuse, purposelessness, fractured relationships and alienation from God. Sometimes these conditions arise immediately, sometimes years later.

According to research by Focus on the Family, one out of every six women aborting is a Christian who attends church weekly. It is more than likely, then, that this is an issue for many at the Cathedral, both men and women. If you or someone you know is languishing after abortion, you can recover from the experience and choose life through the One who triumphed over death. This is His Resurrection power, operating today.

The first steps to abortion recovery are the same as those for reconciliation following any sin. By admitting our sin before God and turning from it in repentance, we will be forgiven and reconciled to Him. The healing process that follows may involve talking with a clergy member or a counselor and working through the experience and its repercussions. Throughout the process the focus is firmly fixed on hope and on restoration to the abundant life Jesus intends for us, both now and forever.

PR

Monument to a Living Lord

By Anne E. Michels, Business Administrator

I RECENTLY FINISHED *THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH* by Ken Follett, an historical novel about the building of a fictitious Gothic cathedral in England in the mid-twelfth century A.D. As historian of our own neo-Gothic Cathedral, I read it primarily because of my great interest in Gothic architecture.

Though he delved deeply into issues and events within the medieval Church, the author admitted that he himself does not hold to the Christian faith. It piqued my interest to learn this before I began reading. I wondered if his writing would convey something of his own view of Christianity.

Toward the end, one of the central characters, Philip—a Benedictine monk and prior of the monastery at which the cathedral is being constructed—witnesses the gruesome murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket (an actual event which occurred in A.D. 1170). Wanting to rally the horrified crowd of onlookers and turn the grieving mob into a movement for good, Prior Philip decides to step up as the leader:

“There was something familiar about this situation, he [Philip] realized. A mutilated corpse, a crowd of onlookers, and some soldiers in the distance: where had he seen this before? *What should happen next, he felt, was that a small group of followers of the dead man would range themselves against all the power and authority of a mighty empire.*

Of course. That was how Christianity started [emphasis mine].”

What? No! I said to myself. This is absolutely *not* how Christianity started according to Scripture. Jesus indeed died on the cross—completely and physically. But His followers cowered away and hid after Jesus died—anything but spurred on to conquer the world.

However, that was not the end. The world may stop there. The Bible does not.

Jesus rose to life again on the third day—fully, bodily and completely. Only after encountering the *resurrected, alive-again* Jesus on Easter morning, and then upon receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, were His followers empowered to spread the Gospel to the world. And the Gospel is not a political message, but the invitation to receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life with God by believing in Jesus. Christianity is not a religion or a political movement, but a relationship with the living Christ who causes empires to rise and fall.

If we are only followers of a dead man as this novel implies, then we are most to be pitied, as the Apostle Paul so aptly put it. If Jesus was not raised from the dead, then the power of sin and death was not broken and we have an eternity in hell awaiting us. Thanks be to God, the world has got it wrong and Scripture is right—Jesus is alive!

I am reminded of that every time I enter our own Cathedral and see the towering figure of the Resurrected Christ suspended above the high altar. That statue—with the cross in the background and the Risen Lord in front with His inviting arms outstretched—symbolizes perfectly the faith we profess: *Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.* Amen!

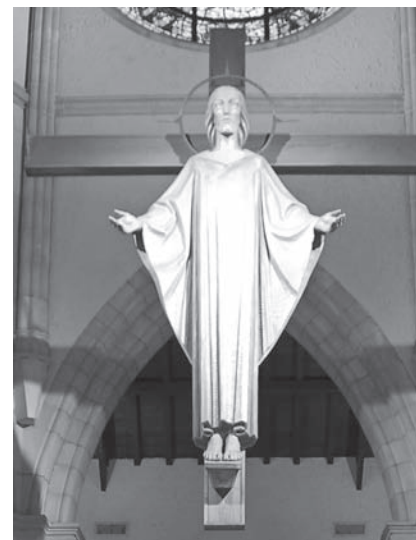
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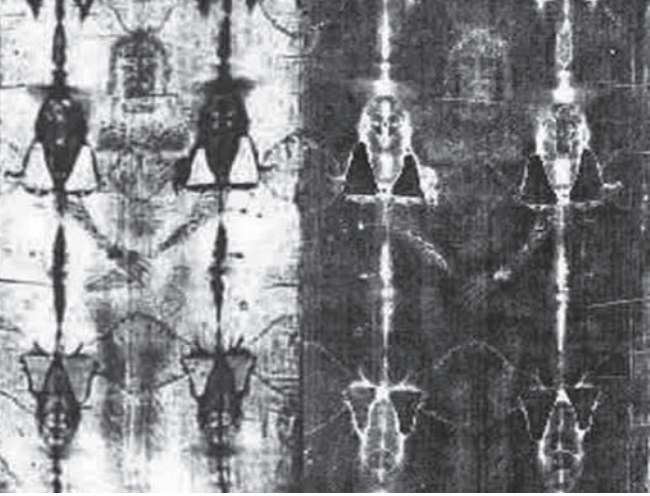
The Risen Christ, our Great High Priest who presides at every Eucharistic celebration, hangs over the Cathedral high altar.

Photo by Chris Gent



Anne Michels has served as Cathedral Administrator since 1991, and Cathedral Historian and Archivist since 2001. She has also served as a facilitator for Walking the Mourner's Path and an instructor for the Divine Drama class. Anne and her husband Dennis live in Orlando.





The Shroud of Turin in a straight on photo (left), and the negative plate of the same image (right). Is the original positive actually a negative, and the negative an actual photograph? Confused? So are centuries of experts.

A Photograph? ...of *What?*

By The Rev. Carolyn S. Petersen

WHILE WALKING THE STATIONS OF THE Cross through the Cathedral my thoughts were immersed in the details of our Lord's suffering. On the way home my mind gravitated to a recent lecture I attended by John Iannone, theologian and scholar, who presented the case for the Shroud of Turin.

The Shroud is one of the most venerated artifacts in the world, revered by the faithful as the burial cloth of Jesus. Iannone cites references by ancient historians who reported seeing the Shroud in Edessa, Turkey, as early as 30 to 40 A.D., believed to have been brought by the apostle Thaddaeus. Indigenous pollens removed from the Shroud confirm its having passed through Edessa.

Skeptics, scientists and the curious have debated and researched the Shroud's authenticity. The cloth bears a shadowy image of a male 5'10" to 6" tall. Details on the cloth are consistent with the Roman practice of crucifixion. Marks peculiar to the Roman flagrum (the whip used for scourgings) have been identified in the areas of the face, back, and torso.

The real surprise came in 1898 when photographs were first taken of the shroud. Technicians were stunned when the negative photographic plates revealed a positive image of the man in the cloth. While attempting to decipher how such an image could have been created, scientists confirmed that the bloodstains were present on the garment *prior* to the image being projected on the fabric.

After much sophisticated testing scientists have proven that the image was not created by paint or heat. Neither are there traces of ink, dye, or chalk comprising the image. It was not painted, etched, drawn or burned into the surface of the cloth. Physicists in recent years

have determined that the image was caused by an intense burst of light projected from the body rather than by heat.

In 1978 the Shroud of Turin Research Project brought teams of scientists together to examine and test the shroud. These researchers determined that the image was the result of an event causing rapid dehydration and oxidation of the linen by an unidentified process. Explanations change from time to time in the scientific community. The wounds are consistent with weapons used by Roman soldiers in the first century in the practice of crucifixion.

Study of pollen grains gleaned from the cloth identifies plants indigenous to the Jerusalem area at springtime, or Passover. One residue was identified as a tumbleweed thorn, consistent with the crown of thorns placed on the victim's head. It is important to note that a crown of thorns was not part of the normal Roman practice of crucifixion.

Iannone relates that in 2002 several physicists concurred that radiation is the best explanation for the formation of the image. Dr. Thomas Phillips, a nuclear physicist, suggests a miliburst of radiation as being consistent with the moment of Resurrection which in turn caused the instantaneous dehydration.

Is the Shroud of Turin truly the burial cloth of our Lord? More pointedly, is it an actual photographic recording of the Resurrection? While science cannot answer such questions, recent scientific studies have placed the burden of credibility on the skeptics. ^{PR}

For additional information and resources by John Iannone go to www.NorthStarProductionStudios.com.

Palms

Symbol and Tradition

By Rosemary W. Atwater

FROM ANCIENT TIMES, PALM-BRANCHES were symbols of victory and triumph. The Romans used to reward their champions of the games with palm-branches. It seems that the Jews followed the same custom of carrying palm-branches on their festive occasions. That is what happened during the solemn entry of Jesus into the Holy City before His last Passover. In the New Testament, the palm-branches, usually cut from date palms, became a symbol of martyrdom, signifying victory over death. The word “Ioinix” (date-palm) became confused with the legendary phoenix, and since the end of the fourth century the palm-branch has become a symbol of the Resurrection.

UNIVERSAL SYMBOL

Palm branches have been used by all nations as emblems of joy and victory. The palms blessed on Palm Sunday were used in the procession of the day, then taken home by the faithful and used as a sacramental.¹ They were preserved in prominent places in the house, in the barns, and in the fields, and thrown into the fire during storms. In places where palms cannot be found, branches of olive, box elder, spruce or other trees are used. In Rome olive branches are distributed to the people, while the clergy carry palms.

One of the contemporary customs is for churches to re-enact Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem with a procession down the church aisle. At the end of the service, the Palm Crosses and fronds are collected and burned. The residual ash is then retained for the Ash Wednesday service the following year.



Rosemary Atwater looks up from her task at hand—compiling, editing, and laying out the *e-Courier*. This is the latest addition to Rosemary’s growing résumé as a nearly full-time volunteer staff person.

LOCAL TRADITION

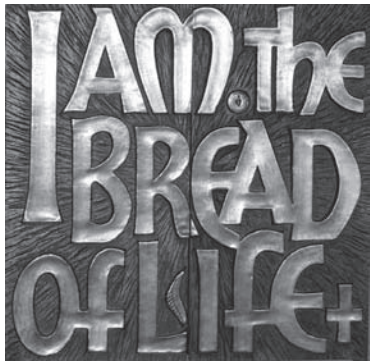
Distributing individual palm crosses made from freshly cut palms has been a tradition at the Cathedral for at least fifty years. Originally native Florida palms cut by the Men’s Club of a church in Longwood were purchased for this use. These were rough cut and required washing and sometimes exterminating in addition to trimming the fronds to a more usable size. After a few years the decision was made to purchase packaged fronds from a church supply house, which were cleaner, uninfested, and more easily cut or stripped to the appropriate size.

Volunteers come Thursday morning prior to Palm Sunday to create these symbols of Jesus’ glorious entry into the Holy City and His subsequent victory over death. Each cross is unique even when made by the same hands, the color ranges from sage to lemongrass and the size ranges from two to six inches in length. Palm Sunday morning they are placed on the altar to be blessed at the 8:00 a.m. Eucharist and picked up when leaving the service. Those who attend the 10:15 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. services are given a blessed cross when they enter the Cathedral. All parishioners receive a “waver” when they enter the Narthex for either Eucharist and this is held aloft for blessing as a part of the service. Crosses and wavers are kept by many parishioners and placed in a Bible or on a wall cross in their homes; otherwise they should be burned, buried or returned to the Cathedral for proper disposal. PR

¹ **sacramental** *n.* an observance analogous to but not reckoned among the sacraments, such as the use of holy water or the sign of the cross.

Palm crosses ready for distribution





**The Tomb is empty,
but not the Tabernacle!**

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pier \pîr\ *n.*

1. *Architecture* Any of various vertical supporting structures, especially:
 - a. A pillar supporting an arch or roof.
 - b. The portion of a wall between windows, doors, or other openings.
 - c. A reinforcing structure that projects from a wall; a buttress.
2. *Literature* The monthly ministry journal of The Cathedral Church of St. Luke, Orlando, Florida.
 - a. Editor/Designer
The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu
 - b. Staff Writer
The Rev. Christine L. Maddux
 - c. Proof Readers
Rosemary Atwater and Theo Gordon
 - d. Photographs
The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu

HOLY WEEK AT A GLANCE

MONDAY, APRIL 6

7:00 AM Holy Eucharist

TUESDAY, APRIL 7

7:30 PM Corporate Rite of Reconciliation

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

12:05 PM Holy Eucharist with Healing Prayer (Lady Chapel)

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 9

6:30 PM Loaves & Fishes Dinner (Great Hall)

7:30 PM Holy Eucharist followed by all night prayer watch

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 10

7:00 AM Good Friday Liturgy and Communion

12:00 N Good Friday Liturgy and Stations of the Cross

7:30 PM Tenebrae

HOLY SATURDAY/EASTER EVE, APRIL 11

8:30 AM Holy Saturday Office

7:30 PM The Great Vigil of Easter

SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION, APRIL 12

7:30 AM Holy Eucharist and Confirmation

10:15 AM Holy Eucharist

6:00 PM Holy Eucharist