



EASTER SUNDAY

“Again and again it is necessary for Jesus to reassure his disciples: ‘Do not be afraid. Peace. Do not be frightened. Peace be with you.’ This is not at all what the women expected early that morning. They came with oils to anoint the body – not a pleasant task, but a necessary time-honored ritual of respect. They loved the Master and would perform for him this final act of mercy.

Approaching the tomb, they stepped into a new creation, a world of figures in dazzling white and guards lying paralyzed on the ground. Although Jesus had made many attempts to prepare his followers for these wonders, the habits of death are hard to break.

In three days, God had remade the world in the image of his Son. From the chaos of Good Friday emerged the Easter Man. No wonder Jesus had to counter the women’s fear. The very air was electric with a new kind of life; oxygen, nitrogen and immortality.

Two-thousand years later we are the sophisticated heirs of those frightened women. Centuries of tradition, a childhood of catechisms, a lifetime of sermons have had their effect. And that effect is too often a routine of creeds and liturgies that lull us into taking for granted the act of the world’s re-creation which is the core of our faith. We are not amazed anymore.

Easter Sunday is a day to examine our capacity for amazement, to take seriously the role so admirably filled by the eyewitnesses to the Resurrection. Our world has allowed us not to be easily amazed. Very little surprises us. Death in all its varied forms has thickened our skins. And in taking death for granted, we begin to take life for granted.

Easter challenges us to rediscover our fear of death and our awe of life. What we, who take Easter seriously, celebrate this day is the fact that the ever-rolling stream need not flow unchecked. With the women at the tomb we stand amazed at a Power greater than death dwelling among us. In the depths of our souls, the fear of death gives way to the bright promise of tomorrow. This is tomorrow. Christians, let us be amazed.” (The Serious Season by Roger Swenson)