



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week

Resurrection and Rejoicing

I love Easter Sunday! I always have. The music is better. The kids and many adults are all dressed in their best. (Although I have a moving picture of myself on one Easter, poised on a large stone in front of our house, pouting and being impossible – but in my fancy new Easter coat and hat!) My feelings about “dressing up” for Easter haven’t really changed much from that day. I still am not a clothes horse – maybe you’ve noticed. But the spirit of Easter is deep within me.

Somewhere along the way, I got imbedded in me the fact of new life and the celebration of life that Easter embodies. When things have become difficult in my life and I feel like giving up, the people of Easter, often church members, have come and supported me. Easter is in integral part of my life. Even the time of Lent, noting 40 days of denial, celebrates Easter every Sunday. The day of Resurrection will never be a day of suffering.

What does Easter mean to you? Each of us is different so each of us will have a different answer to add to the lot.

For some of our children it means egg hunts, new clothes, and sugar highs! No matter how much we emphasize the Resurrection of Jesus, for a while that will be the important part. But the lesson can still be there.

There is the story of a Sunday School class in which the teacher asked the children to bring to class something that reminded them of Easter. She gave them each one of those good old l’eggs eggs and said that would remind them of what they needed to do. The Sunday came when each child brought their item into the class.

All went well with pictures of little chicks and bunnies, candy and all that sort of thing. She had noticed that one of the students, one who had some trouble learning, had only returned with the original l'egg, so she was going to quietly overlook him. But he would have none of it.

“Teacher,” he said, “I want to show you what I think about Easter.” With that, he opened the egg and revealed – nothing.

“But there’s nothing in there,” said the teacher.

“That’s Easter,” he said. “Jesus was dead and they put him in the grave, but on Easter, it was empty, just like this egg.”

We may think we’re pretty smart, but often the lesson God wishes to teach us comes in the simplest ways.

I love Easter Sunday. It’s different for me today than it was when I was three or so, but it means a great deal more. Why? Because as Easter people, the members of many congregations have supported and strengthened me, led me and taught me, opened their hearts to me and let me know that Jesus lives – in them and in me.

I love Easter Sunday because it reminds me that sorrow is not forever, Jesus opened the doors to heaven for me and all those who have gone before me, and he will have that door wide open for me when my time comes. I hope you have experienced the Easter People in the congregations you have attended over the years. It is a joy to know that love abounds, and it abounds in us because of the joy of Easter!

TMK



-- *Week of April 4, 2010*