

Weekend of Sunday, April 1, 2018 – Sunday 11:00 AM
Resurrection of Our Lord/Lectionary X/Proper X/Year B
Primary Text: Mark 16:1-8
Sermon Title: “Who is Fooling Who?”

Theme

The resurrection of Jesus is announced, and the response is one of terror and amazement.

Text

¹When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint [Jesus’ body]. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” ⁸So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Sermon

A pastor was speaking to a group of second-graders about the resurrection of Jesus when one student asked, "What did Jesus say right after He came out of the grave?"

The pastor explained that the Gospels do not tell us what He said.

28 The hand of one little girl shot up. "I know what He said: He said, 'Tah-dah!'"

Q: What book of the Bible first mentions Tennis?

A: Genesis, which says that Joseph served on the Pharaoh's court.

Three churches in a local town pooled their efforts to sponsor a revival. After the revival, members from the three churches gathered to compare notes.

"Our church did very well in the revival," the first noted. "We gained four new members!"

"We did even better," said the second. "Our church gained six new members."

"We were very pleased too," said the third. "We lost our ten most troublesome members."

29

For our pastor's 50th birthday, the congregation decided to give him a new suit.

He was so touched by the gift that the following Sunday he stood before everyone and, with tears in his eyes, announced, "Today I am preaching to you in my birthday suit."-----

A woman went to the beach with her children. Her 4-year-old son ran up to her, grabbed her hand and led her to the shore where a dead sea gull lay in the sand. "Mommy, what happened to him?" the little boy asked. "He died and went to heaven," she replied.

The child thought for a moment and asked, "And God threw him back down?"

While touring Israel, two people thought they'd rent a boat and take it across the Sea of Galilee.

"That'll be a hundred dollars," said the man at the boat rental.

"A hundred dollars? That's an outrageous amount!" one of the tourists exclaimed.

"Ah, but this is the lake *Jesus* walked on," the merchant pointed out.

To which the irritated tourist replied, "For a hundred dollars a boat, I can see why!"

30-----

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large tray of apples. A nun lettered a note and posted it on the apple tray: "Take only ONE. God is watching."

Moving along the lunch line, at the other end was a large tray of chocolate chip cookies. A girl wrote a note, which she put next to the tray of cookies, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."

The pope was touring New York one day. His New York chauffeur, wanting to impress him, said, "Hey, Mr. Pope, anything you want, I'll make it happen for you. Just name it."

"Well," said the Pope thoughtfully, "Now that you mention it, I've always wanted to drive a car. Back in the Vatican they keep me pretty much holed up, and when I want to go out, they always insist on driving me around in that papal buggy. Just once more in my life I'd like to drive myself for a change."

"Hey," said the chauffeur, "No prob." So they got out of the limo and changed places.

The Pope had driven no further than a block before he accidentally ran a red light. Immediately one of those tough New York City cops drove up behind the limo and turned on his lights. He pulled it over and got out of the car. Then he strutted on over to the limo. But before he reached it, he noticed who was driving, went straight back to his car, and called his chief on the radio.

"Chief," he said, "I just pulled over somebody I shouldn't have."

"What," said the chief, "You didn't pull over another cop, did you?"

"No, chief, he's bigger than that," said the cop.

"You didn't pull over the *mayor*, did you?"

"No, chief, he's bigger than that."

"Why you didn't pull over the *president* of the United States, did you?"

"No, chief, he's bigger than that."

"Well then who did you pull over?" the baffled chief asked.

"I don't know," replied the cop, "But whoever he is, he's got the Pope for a chauffeur."

31-----

A man had been shipwrecked on a remote island in the Pacific, and was alone for 20 years. When a ship finally arrived, his rescuers were impressed with the three buildings he had built and asked him about them.

"Well," the man replied, "this is my house, and that building over there is my church. It's a wonderful church and I hate to leave it."

"And what is the third building yonder?" a rescuer asked.

"Oh, that is the church I used to go to," the man replied.

It was Palm Sunday but because of a sore throat, 5-year-old Johnny stayed home from church with a sitter. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds. Johnny asked them what they were for.

"People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by," his father told him.

"Wouldn't you know it," Johnny fumed, "the one Sunday I don't go and he shows up."

A cop pulled over a car and approached the driver, a nun.

"Why were you only driving 23 miles per hour on the Highway?" He asked.

"Well, the sign said 23 miles per hour," she replied.

"No, that sign said Highway 23. That's not the speed limit," he said.

Then, looking at the other nuns in the car, he asked, "Why do your passengers look white as ghosts?"

We just exited Interstate 196," she answered.

32-----

Father O'Malley answers the phone. "Hello, is this Father O'Malley?"

"It is"

"This is the IRS. Can you help us?"

"I can"

"Do you know a Ted Houlihan?"

"I do"

"Is he a member of your congregation?"

"He is"

"Did he donate \$10,000 to the church?"

"He will".

At the pearly gates, St. Peter greeted a minister and congressman and gave them their room assignments.

"Pastor, here are the keys to one of our nicest efficiency units. And for you, Mr. Congressman, the keys to our finest penthouse suite."

"This is unfair!" cried the minister.

"Listen," St. Peter said, "ministers are a dime a dozen up here, but this is the first congressman we've ever seen."

Atheist: "Do you honestly believe that Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish?"

Preacher: "I don't know, sir, but when I get to heaven, I'll ask him."

Atheist: "But suppose he isn't in heaven?"

Preacher: "Then you ask him."

A teacher was testing the children in her Sunday school class to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven.

She asked them, "If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into Heaven?"

"NO!" the children answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into Heaven?"

Again, the answer was, "NO!"

Now she was smiling. Hey, they're getting it, she thought! "Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children, and loved my husband, would that get me into Heaven?" she asked.

Again, they all answered, "NO!"

She was just bursting with pride for them. "Well," she continued, "then how can I get into Heaven?"

A five-year-old boy shouted out, "YOU GOTTA BE DEAD."

Several churches in the South decided to hold union services. The leader was a Baptist and proud of his denomination.

"How many Baptists are here?" he asked on the first night of the revival?

All except one little old lady raised their hands.

"Lady, what are you?" asked the leader.

"I'm a Methodist," meekly replied the lady.

"Why are you a Methodist?" queried the leader?

"Well," replied the little old lady, "my grandparents were Methodists, my mother was a Methodist, and my late husband was a Methodist."

"Well," retorted the leader, "just supposing all your relatives had been morons, what would that have made you?"

"Oh, I see. A Baptist, I suppose," the lady replied meekly.

An old dollar bill and an even older \$100 arrive at a Federal Reserve Bank to be retired.

"I've had a pretty good life," the \$100 says. "I've been to Vegas, the finest restaurants in New York, and even on a Caribbean cruise."

"You did have an exciting life!" the dollar says.

"Where have you been?" the \$100 asks.

"Oh, I've been to the Methodist church, the Baptist church, spent some time with the Lutherans..."

"Wait," the \$100 interrupts. "What's a church?"

34 Hey I like that one! -----

A preacher visits an elderly woman from his congregation. As he sits on the couch he notices a large bowl of peanuts on the coffee table. "Mind if I have a few?" he asks.

"No, not at all!" the woman replied.

They chat for an hour and as the preacher stands to leave, he realizes that instead of eating just a few peanuts, he emptied most of the bowl. "I'm terribly sorry for eating all your peanuts, I really just meant to eat a few."

"Oh, that's all right," the woman says. "Ever since I lost my teeth all I can do is suck the chocolate off them."

A few minutes before the services started, the townspeople were sitting in their pews and talking. Suddenly, Satan appeared at the front of the church. Everyone started screaming and running for the front entrance, trampling each other in a frantic effort to get away from evil incarnate.

Soon everyone had exited the church except for one elderly gentleman who sat calmly in his pew without moving, seeming oblivious to the fact that God's ultimate enemy was in his presence. So Satan walked up to the old man and said, "Don't you know who I am?"

The man replied, "Yep, sure do."

"Aren't you afraid of me?" Satan asked.

"Nope, sure ain't," said the man.

"Don't you realize I can kill you with a word?" asked Satan.

"Don't doubt it for a minute," returned the old man, in an even tone.

"Did you know that I could cause you profound, horrifying, physical AGONY... for all eternity?" persisted Satan.

"Yep," was the calm reply.

"And you're still not afraid?" asked Satan.

"Nope."

More than a little perturbed, Satan asked, "Well, why aren't you afraid of me?"

The man calmly replied, "Been married to your sister for the last 48 years."

A drunk man who smelled like beer sat down on a subway seat next to a priest. The man's tie was stained, his face was plastered with red lipstick, and a half empty bottle of gin was sticking out of his torn coat pocket. He opened his newspaper and began reading.

After a few minutes the man turned to the priest and asked, "Say, Father, what causes arthritis?"

"My Son, it's caused by loose living, being with cheap, wicked women, too much alcohol, and a contempt for your fellow man."

Well, I'll be damned," the drunk muttered, returning to his paper.

The priest, thinking about what he had said, nudged the man and apologized. "I'm very sorry. I didn't mean to come on so strong. How long have you had arthritis?"

"I don't have it, Father. I was just reading here that the Pope does."

One more; 35

It was Good Friday and the body of Jesus Christ, the Son of God had been nailed to the cross till dead. The devil thought to himself, "I've finally won! I've got him right where I want him. In the grave and behind a stone."

The devil threw a party and invited all his minions. The celebrating was still going on when a messenger minion came in with news from Jerusalem, “Master, I mean Devil, I mean your lowest, I mean your most despicableness, Jesus Christ has risen today!”

“What? How can this be?” shouted the devil. “Did he say anything?”

The messenger minion said, “He said, “Ta Dah!”

So I hope you enjoyed that! Now before you all start writing letters to the Council or call the Bishop,

36 let me tell you that Holy Humor Sunday is a real thing, I didn’t make it up, and since it is April Fool’s Day and the devil is the one who was made a fool of on that first Easter Sunday morning, I thought this would be a great way to celebrate the day.

37 That last joke is true, isn’t it? The devil thought he had Jesus exactly where he wanted him. Dead and in the grave. And his disciples had scattered. Why it would be no time before he would be forgotten about and the devil would be expanding his kingdom of hell.

But, as I tell the children every week, *God loves us so much that he couldn’t bear to go through eternity without us.* And while I usually conclude telling the children, *so he sent Jesus to show us how to live a godly life,* today you can hear the unvarnished gospel because it’s all good news.

Jesus showing us how to live a godly life wasn’t enough – we just can’t seem to get it right, and so God had to use his “nuclear option.” He sent his own Son, Jesus to the cross to die in our place for the forgiveness of sin.

That is why we call Friday, the commemoration of his death, Good Friday, because the cross is Good News for those who are bound to sin.

But wait there’s more!

God raised Jesus from the dead and has given him the power over life and death.

We who are baptized in Christ Jesus,
are baptized into his death.

We were buried therefore with him
by baptism into death,
so that as Christ was raised from the dead
by the glory of the Father,
we too might live a new life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his,
we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

This is the good news of Easter

38

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**