

Easter Sunday

For the last 50 days we have been watching and listening to the reports of what has been happening in Ukraine. We have been deeply saddened by the loss of life, the destruction of cities and the displacement of families. And all the while we have been appalled by the efforts of the Russian leadership to deny the truth of what has been happening. The truth has been made clear to us by those who witnessed the events of the Russian invasion.

This morning, Luke has revealed the truth of the Lord's Resurrection to us by allowing us to see and hear what happened when some of the women disciples of Jesus went to the tomb where Jesus had been buried. It is very early on Sunday morning. The stone had been rolled away. We go into the tomb with them and find that there is no body there. But what does that mean? While we are trying to work that out, we are joined by two men in brilliant clothes. They ask us why we are looking among the dead for someone who is alive. They explain that we will not find him in the tomb because he has risen from the dead.

What happens next is very important for they ask us to remember what Jesus had said to us about his passion his death and his rising to life again on the third day. It is at that moment that we begin to understand what we are seeing. It is because we remember what Jesus said that

we come to believe that he is risen. We allow Jesus himself to interpret the empty tomb.

That question, "do you not remember?" is often asked of a disciples of Jesus. We are invited over and over again to look back on our own history and on the history of God's people to remember what God has said to us and how God has been there for us. We can only interpret what is happening in our lives today by remembering where God has been for us yesterday.

This is something that many of us find difficult and we often need people around us who are people of faith who can help us to notice where God has been at work and to remember what God has done. Each time we gather here to celebrate the Eucharist, we listen to the story of those who have been witnesses of the resurrection. Today in the reading from the acts of the Apostles it was Peter witnessing to the resurrection. "Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses ."

We too are called to be witnesses of our union with the Risen Lord. In our gospel reading we saw how once the women had come to believe that Jesus had risen, they couldn't help but go and tell others about it. Those women became the first witnesses of the truth of the resurrection. That their story was not believed by those they told should not surprise us. The men disciples there thought that they were delirious. You and I live in a world where truth is often hard to find and faith in Jesus is a rare commodity. Many say that only the simple minded can believe in someone who died for us on a cross and rose again from the dead. This can either depress us or help us to see how privileged we are to know Jesus and to draw life from him.

In a few moments we are going to renew our baptism promises. We are going to say that we reject all that is not of God and reaffirm our faith in the God whose love and mercy was revealed to us by Jesus. May we ask that Jesus to help us to reflect more clearly the life and the love that he has renewed in us today.