

The Empty Tomb is a Fertile Womb

April 4, 2010, Easter Vigil & Day, C, Luke 24: 1-12

The International Air Guitar Championships are dedicated to peace. They believe that if everybody played an air guitar, wars and bad things in the world would end. That's what I love about playing air guitar. With a real guitar only "*practice makes perfect*" but with an air guitar you don't need any talent or practice to look good and never hit a sour note.

On Easter we celebrate the most perfect championship event in history, and event that ended death forever. Whatever you think is killing you, whatever straightjacket you are wearing, you can escape. You can walk from darkness into the light of life. Because "*death is dead,*" there is a new world of new possibilities for all believers.

When God raised Jesus from the bonds of death, God chose a few ordinary women, who could not even testify in court, to be the first witnesses to the empty tomb. All the gospels stress how important the early Sunday morning witnesses were to the faith of the brothers and sisters who never saw the empty The women who thought they had only come to clean and perfume a corpse became the first broadcasters of the resurrection.

The only way that Jesus' resurrection can continue to destroy death for each new generation is with women, men and youth as new witnesses. Those of us who believe these ordinary women are called by Jesus to spend our lives "*practicing resurrection*" by re-telling the story of the Good Friday sacrifice and the miracle of the empty tomb every day.

Even when the empty tomb miracle is met with disbelief, we witnesses are still called to keep witnessing.

Thomas Aquinas believed that the church was not just the living witness to the “*risen Christ*,” but the “*rising Christ*” who never stops calling on us to reach out of darkness in search of the light and to call to our brothers and sisters to leave the darkness and move to the light. Jesus asks each of us to keep practicing telling the story even when we hit a few sour notes, remember “*practice makes perfect.*”

From the testimony of a few frightened ordinary women has given birth to the Christ-body, the church that has changed the world. The empty tomb is not a dead grave but a “Womb” fertile and living, that birthed a faith that has overcome death and the power of evil and will continue to give birth to new life when we “practice what we preach” by living and loving our neighbor enough that we want them to be alive with us and Jesus Christ for all eternity.

The work of resurrection faith is to remember Christ’s words, stories, miracles and promises. It is in remembering that we will “*re-member*” again and again for each new generation the miracle of the resurrection from the empty tomb. The Christ-body in 2010 might not play perfect music but as long as we *re-member* the body will keep growing and make beautiful music. New Life is birthed from the Cross and the fertile tomb.