

Easter Sunday 2017

What's wrong with this picture? Does anyone notice something or someone who doesn't belong in the picture? Well you should if you listened to the Gospel of Matthew which I read. The artist does a pretty good job of depicting the shocking elements of Matthew's version. Problem is that there are no witnesses of Jesus' coming out of the tomb as you see here. Not in Matthew, nor in Mark, nor in Luke nor in John. No one "sees" Jesus like we see him depicted here. What is critical to our faith is two things. The disciples encountered an "empty tomb" which led them to wondering what the heaven was going on. It left them fearful and amazed. It's not until they encounter the Risen Jesus on the way, that they come to belief.

What's wrong with this picture? Here we are crammed into a church on Easter Sunday that is usually full but not overflowing singing songs of victory and life when death surrounds us. How dare we proclaim that Jesus is risen when wars continue to rage, when innocent children are subject to chemical weapons, when our military dares to associate the word Mother with the most destructive non-nuclear weapon?

How dare we proclaim life's victory over death when downstairs over 1000 homeless are being fed as they are every Sunday here at the Welcome Table?

What's wrong with this picture of "Happy Easter" when the world is not a happy place? As I was standing outside this morning wishing people a Happy Easter, most were just absorbed in their own worlds and worries. Very few smiles! How dare we Happy Easter in this broken world?

What's right with this picture? Here we are crammed into a church on Easter that is usually fully but not overflowing singing songs of victory and life. As we should. Each of us I believe has looked into the empty tomb of our world and even of ourselves and have been shocked and stunned to realize that in Jesus Christ God's love triumphs. Each of us I believe has encountered the Risen Jesus "on the way", on our own personal journey of faith, hope and love.