

Fr. John Sassani
Homily Given on April 8, 2012
Easter Sunday
Liturgical Year B

The Gospel of the Resurrection that we just heard is different from the stories of the Resurrection in Matthew, Luke, and John. Each of them has an angel announce the Resurrection to the women who have come to finish the burial customs for Jesus. In Mark, there is no angel at the tomb...there is a young man. For years I was intrigued by this difference, and the more I read the Gospel of Mark, I began to notice some intriguing connections.

In the tenth chapter of Mark, there is a figure whom we traditionally have called the Rich Young Man. He is a person of deep desire. He comes to Jesus and asks, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus tells him, in a rather matter-of-fact way, to keep the commandments. He replies by saying that he has kept them since he was a child. So Jesus invites him to go further. "Sell what you have, give to the poor, come follow Me." St. Mark tells us that the man's face fell, for he had many possessions. End of story.

But then, for years I noticed a peculiar character in Mark 14. When Jesus is arrested in the garden, there is a young man there dressed only in a sheet. They arrest Jesus, and they try to arrest the young man too...but all they got was the sheet, and he ran away naked. I began to think that perhaps this is the rich young man. He sold everything except a sheet in order to follow Jesus.

Finally, the Gospel this morning began to make sense. This man has been following Jesus for a while, and he becomes a sign, a sacrament for us. He is not perfect, but he is making progress little by little...and he becomes an evangelist who shares the Hope and Joy he has discovered with others.

In the same way, we have been following Jesus, making progress little by little, and becoming evangelists. We may find ourselves sharing our hope and joy with others, perhaps driving home from church or after religious education...whenever the Spirit comes over us. As we come to the Eucharist today, let us come in thanksgiving for the hope and joy we have because of Christ, our Risen Lord.

Happy Easter to all of you!