

April 12, 2020 | Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord (A)

[ACTS 10:34A, 37-43](#)

[PS 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23](#)

[COL 3:1-4 or I COR 5:6B-8](#)

[JN 20:1-9](#)

By Don Timmerman

Peter says we are witnesses to all Jesus did in Jerusalem during Holy Week. That week began with a donkey ride showing the humility of Christ. He is often referred to as a meek and humble lamb. The people are praising him by waving palms, not with banners normally used to welcome a king or a prince. Christ's greatness does not come from his wealth or weapons. His greatness comes from his willingness to sacrifice everything he has or could be tempted to have for the sake of God's will and for helping others. He was great because he loved everyone.

Today we celebrate Christ's resurrection not with the old yeast that looked to violence and political power to save Israel, but with the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," which is simple, humble, sacrificial love which seeks to serve.

Recently, I saw an African American man who was doing what Christ would have done. He saw all the old people coming out of the store empty-handed. If they didn't have any toilet paper, he just gave them some. His car was packed with the stuff and he was just giving it all away. I talked with him for a while.

He told me that his family had bought up a bunch of toilet paper and hand sanitizer. They were hoarding it. This man told me that he got into a big argument with his family about it. They finally got tired of arguing and his family told him to take half of the stuff and do whatever he wanted with it. So he just started giving it away to whoever needed it. He was not a rich person. He came from a long line of ancestors who had been slaves and taken advantage of for most of their lives. He did not want praise nor any reward for doing what he was doing. He was a humble, caring person, like Christ. He showed love to those in need.

In the resurrection, God vindicates Jesus's words, actions, and ways of loving as the new way we are called to imitate. It is the new model of greatness and holiness. We are reminded to practice what Christ practiced and to share the Good News with others in words and acts of love. Jesus loved all, even the ones who were calling him names, wrongfully blaming him, flogging him, and killing him. He continued to love his disciples, even Judas who betrayed him. He shared a meal, the last supper, with them; and all, even Judas, was served. Not one of them was turned away.

Recently Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez told members of Congress that it strikes her that "if Christ himself walked through these doors and said what he said thousands of years ago — that we should love our neighbor and our enemy, that we should welcome the stranger, fight for the least

of us, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into a kingdom of heaven — he would be maligned as a radical and rejected from these doors.”

Christ saved us by showing us how we can be happy. All we have to do is do good to all, even our enemies out of love for them. He forgave those who persecuted and killed him. He still loved them. We, if we are true Christians we will also be berated, lied to, and deeply hurt by others, sometimes even by those we are trying to help. This is hard to accept, but we would be happy because we would rise above hate and retaliation and would become great by loving all just as Christ loves us. Love drives out hate and fear and replaces it with happiness. This is what made Christ great, and it will make us great as well.

The joy of Easter calls us to give, not hoard and to forgive, not seek revenge. Happiness comes from being like Christ, the lover of all, who is risen from the dead. He calls us to rise from ways of death: hatred, evil, greed, discrimination, bigotry, legalism and hypocrisy. Alleluia. He has risen. May we all rise with Him.

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