



YES!!! – Touchpoint for April 13, 2022

Luke 24:1-12 *But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body.*

TOUCH POINT

While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again."

Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

Grace and peace from the YES in whom we live and move and have our being.

This is such a strange Wednesday for us to gather. There is so much happening between now and next Wednesday when we get together. There is Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and of course, Easter Sunday. How does one talk about it all without going on and on and on?

How do we see this as one cohesive whole, rather than simply a series of disconnected events? So as I sat and thought about this Wednesday, and what to say, one phrase kept coming to me. And it is this...

God's YES to our NO.

This week is about God's YES to our NO.

Think about Maundy Thursday. There is the NO of Peter's denial. There is the NO of Judas' betrayal. There is the NO of the other disciples abandoning him in the garden of Gethsemane.

And on that night, he answers with a giant YES. "Take and eat. Take and drink. This is me. Always connected and re-connected to you. Always membered and re-membered with you."

Jesus says YES to the brokenness of our NO, and embraces it, becomes it, and takes it into himself.

Think of Good Friday. There is the NO of the political realm, Pilate and Herod. There is the NO of the religious world, Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. There is the NO of the public square, "Crucify him! We have no king but Caesar."

And in the midst of this cacophony of NO, Jesus is heard to utter a YES. "Father forgive them..."

Jesus takes on all the NO's of the world, and responds back with a bigger YES.

And finally, Easter Sunday. Since Friday afternoon, Jesus has experienced the greatest NO humanity can impose – Jesus experiences death. It is humanity's ultimate NO. There is no greater NO you can impose on another human being than death.

And on Sunday morning, Jesus responds with a greater YES. And we are left staring at an empty tomb, in shock and wonder. And bewildered at what it means that God's YES is bigger than our NO. That our NO has been swallowed up into God's YES.

In Holy Week, we often talk about how God, in Jesus, has entered into the pain and suffering of human existence, God has become AT-ONE with us in life and death, pain and sorrow, suffering and doubt. There is no place, there is no point, there is no experience in life that the Mystery has not connected itself to. To paraphrase St. Paul when he writes, "*Christ became sin...*" We can say in this context, "Christ has become the NO, taken on the NO of humanity."

But this week isn't just about God taking on the NO of humanity. It's about us being taken up into the YES of God.

It is about tasting God's YES on Thursday. Hearing God's YES on Friday. And living God's YES on Sunday.

I think it was Luther who called this the great 'nevertheless.' In spite of all the NO's we experience in our lives, NEVERTHELESS, there is still this great YES that stands over it all.

It is this YES that gets us through the times of pain and suffering. It is this YES that gets us through our times of despair and doubt. It is this YES that we meet in the lowest points of our lives.

This YES is experienced every morning in a sunrise. It is experienced in every leaf and flower of springtime.

We see this YES in the Ukrainian people who will not let the NO of Putin and his henchmen have the last word. We hear this YES in the outcast and marginalized of our society as they call us to a greater humanity. Reminding us that God's YES is for all people, and not just one group.

You and I are a part of the Mystery's YES. You and I are included in God's YES.

The world beats us up with its NO. We beat ourselves up with our internal NO.

"NO, you don't measure up. NO, you are not good enough. NO, NO, NO!"

And in the midst of those NO's, we hear a giant YES.

But it isn't a YES that says, "Yes, you do measure up," or "Yes, you are good enough." It's rather a YES that says, "YES, you don't have to measure up. YES, you don't have to be good enough. Because it's not about measuring up or being good enough. My YES will simply embrace and transform your NO."

It is a YES that simply calls to us and says...

"Be still, and know that I am God. Be still, and know that I am YES."

It all begins with a YES. It all ends with a YES.

It is the YES in which we live and move and have our being.

And so this week, this Holy Week, my prayer for you is this:

That you will taste the YES of connection, that is in the food and fellowship you share...

That you will hear the YES of forgiveness, that is in the voice of a loved one and a morning sunrise...

That you will live the YES of life, that empties the tombs of NO that enclose us...

My prayer for you this week, this Holy Week, is that you will:

Taste God's YES of Thursday. Hear God's YES of Friday. And live God's YES of Sunday.

You are a part of God's YES.

After all, you are made in the image of the Divine YES.

YES!!!

You are.

Amen.

Spirit in the Desert

Opening Song

Be Still

(London Fox Taize Choir)

Be Still, know that I am God.

Hosanna

(Simply Taize)

Hosanna in excelsis

Bible Passage

(A passage takes us from one place to another)

Touchpoint

(Where God's story touches our life story)

Heaven Sings With Gladness

(Taize)

Heaven sings with gladness. Earth sings out rejoicing. Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

The Meal

The Lord's Prayer

(Monastery Choir of St. John of San Francisco)

Benediction

Hallelujah

(George Frideric Handel)

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth

The kingdom of this world is become
the kingdom of our Lord

And of His Christ, and of His Christ
And He shall reign for ever and ever

King of kings (Forever and ever Hallelujah! Hallelujah!)
And Lord of lords (Forever and ever Hallelujah! Hallelujah!)

Forever and ever
Forever and ever
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!