



**May 22, 2022 – Easter 6 (C)**  
**Week 5: Reflections on the Resurrection**

*During the Easter season, Sermons That Work is pleased to present reflections from bishops of The Episcopal Church on the resurrection of our Lord. Check back each week for a brief exploration of how Jesus Christ's rising from the grave changes everything. To listen to this reflection, scan the QR code on this page and subscribe to the Sermons That Work podcast.*

Fairy tales, fables, and Bible stories offer us narratives to live by. While the stories are deep and transforming, we often tend toward the soundbites of wisdom that may have stemmed from the Bible or other literary treasure.

“Honesty is the best policy.”

“Don't bite the hand that feeds you.”

“Where there is a will there is a way.”

As a child, I went to church and Sunday school. Content was delivered in simple terms. Matters of faith stayed on the level of repetition of familiar stories and pithy wisdom. As most children are, I was drawn to the liturgy. In “big” church there were symbols and rituals to explore. There was an intriguing story unfolding each Sunday – and in myself. The liturgy carried us to the table where the feast of bread and wine, body and blood, was to be found. There our personal narrative merged with that of Jesus. The death and resurrection we know in the Christian story was our story too.

“Jesus died and rose again.”

“Jesus died so we might live.”

These can be pithy phrases as well. They could easily appear on a billboard. When we are baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we bravely step into the rhythm of dying and rising as we move through the ups and downs of life. It is the physical process of death and resurrection in nature that generates new life, and it is the spiritual equivalent that brings forth new life within us. We see the posture in Jesus' body; arms outstretched, suffering, and yet, bearing an open and accepting heart. Welcome death. Both physical and spiritual deaths take us to a darkness we cannot imagine. Resurrection always comes and delivers us to a light that in its grace and beauty is unspeakable. Life is not the same but new life has emerged.

I have found in my own life that while I may not understand intellectually what is happening as life's circumstances invite me to welcome the process of death and resurrection, my Christian journey has formed me to trust this spiritual process. After all, it is the heart of our Christian faith. Knowing it is true one can hold fast to deep peace despite the worst that life offers. In the darkness we can wait until light and new life comes again.

This season, may you dwell deeply in the Easter story, dying and rising with the living God we know in Jesus Christ. May your trust in the process of death and resurrection increase, and may new life make you a beautiful witness to the glory of God!

+Mary Gray-Reeves  
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*This text, entitled “Death and Resurrection Isn't Just for Jesus,” was written by **the Rt. Rev. Mary Gray-Reeves**, who served as Bishop Diocesan of El Camino Real from 2007 until 2020. She now serves as the Managing Director of The College for Bishops of The Episcopal Church, supporting the education and formation of all bishops in The Episcopal Church. She makes her home in Charlotte, North Carolina.*