

easter

Remember this cracked pot? It has journeyed with us through Lent.. It has been a symbol for us, for our fragile, broken journey.. with the cracks where the light shines through, the gold of God's presence in it all.. in the Lenten journey.

But, now, i wonder, can this cracked pot also be a symbol for God, vulnerable in Jesus, beaten, bruised, murdered, cracked and broken open.. yet risen with his wounds...this cracked loving pot, a symbol of Easter.. the empty tomb, hope!

Behind red curtains in the tiny Mesac chapel, on the left hand side of the sanctuary at St Saviours Cathedral in Goulburn, there is a stained glass window.<sup>1</sup>

It tells a story in two parts, on the left are two men looking into Jesus' tomb. On the right, there is a woman in red with long curling hair reaching out, and a man standing above her, nail marked hand held up in warning. Under this window these words are written:

'Do not touch me'

'Do not touch me'.

These words set me thinking and wondering. Is this the central message of Easter, 'Do not touch me'?

'Stay away, do not get too close' – they imply. I don't like this!

Then I looked closer at the story, at the words, i found, 'do not touch me', is a mistranslation. 'Do not hold on to me' 'do not cling to me' ... might be better.

This gives a different slant: 'do not cling onto me', let go a bit, let go of what you thought you knew — maybe I am more than you can grasp.

Like a pupae in the cocoon, Jesus is in his own vulnerability.

Something is happening to him.

Beloved Mary is in front of him

'No, don't touch, don't grasp, I'm changing!' He is saying 'let me change, like a larvae, wriggling through, let me change'.

We see the vulnerability of Christ this morning.

He is changing. He is not fully formed. Like the drying of the wings of a butterfly ... shuddering, pumping, uncertainty', Jesus is transforming — becoming.

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://resources.holycovenant.org.au/docs/sermons/2010/Sermon\\_2010-04-04\\_Easter.pdf](https://resources.holycovenant.org.au/docs/sermons/2010/Sermon_2010-04-04_Easter.pdf)

So touch lightly. Mary came expecting death, and found, what?  
Found herself known and named. 'Mary' he said.  
'Rabbi', Teacher she responded, and reached out. Mary came  
expecting death, and found life, found love, found change, found  
herself, found Jesus – unrecognisable, until she is named.

Do not cling onto the past, let go, let the future unfold and expand  
your understanding of God.

What brings you here today I wonder? What are you expecting?

Who do you expect to meet?

And what is the meaning of this Easter day?

Is it that darkness cannot extinguish the light. That death is not the  
end, that sorrow is transformed into new life. That Christ is risen!

'Do not touch me, do not cling onto what you think you know.'

It is only in letting go that you can grow.

Sue Monk Kidd in her book *The Heart Waits — Spiritual Direction  
for Life's Sacred Questions*, uses the metaphor of the caterpillar —  
chrysalis — butterfly to describe her journey of growth, and  
transformation — her darkness and questioning, her letting go and  
waiting, her stillness, and unfurling wings — the Lent, holy week,  
Easter journey.<sup>2</sup>

She shares her experience of the Easter vigil at Grace Cathedral in  
San Francisco, she says:

'As I knelt there the wounds and broken places in my past, the  
conflict in my present and the questions surrounding my future  
became an awful throb in my chest. I felt the tensions pull until there  
was a small crescendo of pain inside me. The darkness closed in. I  
moved from my knees back onto my seat. My thoughts about Jesus  
waiting in the tomb for Easter began to blend with the thoughts I'd  
had during the week about the soul waiting in the womb for new  
birth. Womb and tomb. .... The darkness of Jesus' tomb became a  
place of transformation, a womb, the waiting room of new life. The  
darkness of death was transformed into a life giving dark.

Can this happen within us as well? I believe so.

She writes:

---

<sup>2</sup> Sue Monk Kidd in her book *The Heart Waits — Spiritual Direction for Life's Sacred Questions*,  
pages 154–155

Julian of Norwich wrote that our wounds became the womb... Transformation hinges on our ability to turn our pain (the tomb) into a fertile place where life is birthed (the womb) ...'

She continues:

'We had reached the point in the service when the Paschal candle is lit as a reminder that from the spirit of the darkness of Jesus' tomb, the radiance of new life is coming.

"The light of Christ," the priest said as he held the fire to the candle the little flame caught and flickered in the darkness, disappeared, then returned, quivering on and off in a draft of wind. I thought of the line I had written in my journal earlier in the week. "I feel as if a candle has blown out inside me". The strange synchronicity made my heart beat faster. I did not want that candle to go out.

Suddenly the priest lifted his hands and cupped them around the flame. As the light of the candle grew stronger, the sight of him cradling that little speck of fire burned into me. It was an image of bare, unscripted grace: the light of Christ.

Throughout the service I gazed at the candle's flame ... When I left the church I carried that tiny bit of Easter fire inside me. This fire, which belongs to us all, is nothing less than the pulse of a new life within the soul. That Holy Saturday, I heard God say to me, Cup your hands around it.'

'There's a line from a poem by Gerard Manly Hopkins that speaks to me: 'Let him easter in us, be a dayspring to the dimness of us, be a crimson-cresseted east'. Until I read that line it had never occurred to me to think of Easter as a verb. But it is, isn't it? Easter isn't only a long ago event that happened but an action that goes on happily inside us today. To quote 'let him Easter in us' is to let the Christ-life incubate within the darkness of our waiting. The Christ-life is like the Pascal candle spluttering in the darkness. We need gentle hands cupped around it, coaxing the flame to grow stronger. I learnt that in transformation we mustn't run from the darkness but must rather coax the Easter light inside it. I learnt that we turn the darkness of the tomb into the darkness of the womb by cupping our hands around the pulse of True Life and helping it grow'.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> p 156

One way we coax the life of the new self is by living the questions that inhabit any dark night, by dwelling creatively with the unresolved inside us ... and letting it grow.<sup>4</sup>

'Mary'.

He speaks my name and I recognise, he is alive, and I am alive. I want to hold onto to this but even this is unreal.

'Do not cling to me...

this is bigger than you, bigger than me

bigger than us....

Go and tell the others...' She got up and she ran, ran for her life!

'I have seen the Lord' she said... new life, the light burns still.

I am growing,

Transformation is happening.

From the cracks gold shines.

Community forms.

The story is repeated again and again and again.

Butterflies emerge from the chrysalis, 'Christ is risen. He is risen indeed' - transformation.. there are butterflies everywhere!!

New life.

'Christ is risen. He is risen indeed'.

Susanna

---

<sup>4</sup> p 157