

cEaster Day ~ April 4, 2010 ~ A homily preached by The Rev'd Erl G. Purnell at Old St. Andrew's Church, Bloomfield, CT

Acts 10.34-43; Psalm 118.1-2, 14-24; 1st Corinthians 15.19-26; John 20.1-18

April 4th, 2010. You all know what that means, right? This Holy Sunday? It's ... the day after Apple's iPad was released in stores across the U.S. Scores of people, millions actually, flocked to the Apple Store yesterday to pick up their pre-ordered iPads or they stood patiently in line (Apple-types are well behaved) at the chance an iPad was on the store shelf just for them. The excitement of it all. The drama. The opportunity to own this newest piece of technology—Wi-Fi, 64gig, 3G, keyboard-less newspaper - email envelope - internet surfer - music box - page turning book machine - game player - photo album viewer - calendar - video device - mobile app apparatus, and more.

Did you get one? Did you get two? Me neither. Although, as Dennis Desrochers knows all too well, I'm a bit of an Apple nut. I have my MacBook laptop, an iPod, and an iPhone. With the predictability of the sun rising, all of my Apple products simply work. Buy them, take them home, turn them on ... and they work ... every time. Well, once in a while I spy a hen with teeth wandering through the office and I need to reboot my MacBook, but I spend no hours on the phone talking to Microsoft experts in Lahore or New Delhi.

I suppose all of those new iPad owners are sitting at home right now, this Easter Sunday morning, enjoying their wonderful new machines. I can just hear the Oos and Ahs. And, I guess that's one way to celebrate the resurrection. You'll recall that in late 1987, Apple founder, Steve Jobs, was ousted from the company by then CEO John Sculley. In the years that immediately followed, Jobs started Next Computer and Apple tanked.

On life support in December 1996, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette headlined the end of Apple's demise: *Founder Is Back To Polish Apple*. A quote in that article speaks to the challenge Apple had at the time: "Apple must once again position itself as the computer for the rest of us."

CNN's headline yesterday on their website showed a picture of a woman holding up two freshly boxed iPads with the caption proclaiming, "At long last, Apple fans get their hands on new iPads." Apple stock is selling at its all-time high. Jobs, although he needed a kidney transplant a year ago, is alive and touted as the world's most valuable CEO. He's 55 and worth about \$55 billion.

Resurrection. This spring of 2010 is so different from a year ago. In March, the nation created 162,000 jobs (no pun intended), quite a contrast to losing nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million in March of 2009. Agree or not with the politics, President Obama has signed into law a new healthcare bill. Housing starts in February were up 11.3% above last February. The value of the dollar is up against most currencies world-wide. The Red Sox will beat the Yankees at Fenway tonight in the season opener. And, by all measures, it's an early spring.

I suppose we can be very monolithic in our thinking. Let's call it *rut stuck*, when everything becomes fixed and we get all satisfied. Things just have to be the way they are! Then, when unexpected or unwanted change comes, we get spun around. That happened to a lot of people during this recession. Folks were knocked for a loop and left to catch their breath as the monster sped through the backyard of the American dream.

Change is the only constant, right? In the past few years we've faced a lot of change and we've needed to die to old ways. We have been forced to look at our lives, what's important, what we can and cannot do in creative ways. Some of what we once had counted on is no longer possible.

And yet, the death of these old ways, these cherished expectations has ushered in chances to do new things. In these myriad deaths, I think the question to ask is not what's died, but, what's come to life? What dreams or behaviors have we—have you—awoken to? Maybe you've decided to come back to church, to finish college, or to be more generous. What's been born in you and in the world around you? Think about it.

Here it is Easter Day, and I haven't mentioned Jesus yet. It's quite intentional. You see, Jesus was pointing to something through his resurrection. But, when you stare only at his pointing finger, you miss entirely where he wants you to look. What matters, it seems to me, is that we see rebirth and resurrection in who it is we are and can be, that is, through nurturing our relationships by our compassion and forgiveness, by standing in the fires of justice, and by loving wastefully. In these, the resurrection happens every day and today. Joyeuses Pâques. Happy Easter.

Amen.