

*The Morning News*  
*(Easter morning, 2007- John 20:1-18)*

---

I have to confess to you one of my many private sins. Actually, it's an addiction. If I don't get to do this every day, I feel lost, out of synch with reality, confused and disoriented. It's similar to any other addiction, in that I *must* have my daily fix – I *must* ...read the morning newspaper!

It's sad but true! An addiction which I blame on the *New York Times*, that began this problem by offering to our sixth grade elementary school class the *New York Times* to every pupil who wanted it for only a penny a day (I think the newsstand price than was 10 cents). From that time on, I was hooked! – Not just on the *New York Times*, but on reading the morning newspaper. When I lived in Germany, I read the local Munster paper and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*. Since moving to Toronto, after a brief and stormy fling with the *Toronto Star*, I have begun the day with the breakfast and the *Globe and Mail*.

I suppose one could listen to the CBC morning news programs. Or turn on CNN on TV. But for me, nothing beats reading the morning newspaper. You can pick which articles to read first, - ease your way into the crises of the world by reading the sports page first! You can stop reading whenever you get bored or disagree with the commentary, You can take your time – re-read, re-think, absorb – something that you cannot do with radio or TV newscasts.

My old cat Max seems to like the morning newspaper – he wants to climb up on the breakfast table, and get right on the spread-out newspaper. And although he cannot read, he has a marvellous ability to sit right on the article I am reading.! Maybe it's his way of expressing editorial opinion!

I find the morning news to be necessary to my daily interaction with the world into which I will be living in that day. In the morning news we become orientated in to our world and the community of humanity. We learn of events in far away places and are in that way joined to all peoples throughout the earth. We are exposed to the whole spectrum of our communal activity – from events and decisions which influence the life of the nation, to the results of last night's sports events; we read the carefully formulated thoughts of editorialists and columnists and read of the

thoughtless acts of violence and criminality; we read the pronouncements of world leaders and the opinions of our neighbours in their letters to the editor. We learn of mega-billion business deals and also of the struggles of others just to make ends meet. Everything that forms our life – music, arts, drama, food, finance, fashion, politics, sports, war and peace, crime and punishment – all of it is in the morning newspaper. Some of it astounding in its importance, some of it drearily ordinary! All of it telling you what kind of a world you will be living in today. All of it telling you how the world has changed from yesterday to today.

I think that the Easter proclamation is the ultimate *morning news*! It's God's way of informing us about what is *really* happening in the world.

The first Easter *Morning News* told the story of a miraculous event, which even the most believing disciples did not at first believe. It was broadcast by a network of unlikely reporters, - women who were on the fringe of society. After a the seeming victory of shouting mobs, weak-willed and evil rulers, and power-hungry religious leaders, the *morning news* that Mary Magdalene brought to the disciples was astounding: "*I have seen the Lord*" It was like a drowsy Torontonionian opening the morning paper and finding on the front page a great big headline: *NHL takes pity on Maple Leafs: awards them Stanley Cup. Or, Politicians tell the truth.* Simply astounding, unbelievable!

But the *morning news* of Christ's resurrection is more than just a shocking headline, it's much more than the report of a miraculous event in the past. The *Morning News* of Easter is God's way of telling us about the reality of the world and our life. God gets our attention with the headline: *Christ is risen!* Headlines can get your attention, and they have to do that to get you to read the article and to want to understand the meaning of the story. God gets our attention by this confrontational headline challenging not only our faith but also our understanding of how the world works. Once we have been grabbed by the headline, we can go on into the story and hear what God has to say to us.

And when we are attentive to the Easter *Morning News*, we begin to understand that our ideas of life and death, of power in the world, and almost everything else we do and experience – all that has profoundly changed. It is as when, reading the *Morning Newspaper*, one is slowly brought out of the remnants of last night's dreams – or nightmares, - brought out of the failures

and frustrations of yesterday, brought out of the confusion of life and into understanding what the world and your life are *really* like.

And it's not just the *morning news* at Easter. The real *morning news* of Easter is that this same headline – Christ is risen!~– is the headline for every day in the history of world from that first Easter onward. It is this blaring headline to the human story that gives everything a new meaning, that makes everything completely new. St. Paul knew that when he wrote to to the Christian congregation in Galacia in modern-day Turkey, <sup>0</sup> *and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* The Easter *morning news* is telling you that everything has changed – we are no longer the captives of our past failures, our true life is no longer dominated by death, the powerful of this world don't have ultimate power and the poor of this world are more powerful than we can imagine.

And like any good newspaper, the Easter *morning news* not only gives the big story of changed humanity and the issues of life and death, but it tell you how that main story – *Christ is risen*- plays out in the hundreds of little stories one finds in any morning paper. The Easter *morning news* tell us

- of ordinary people doing acts of extraordinary caring and love for their neighbours,
- it tells of Easter morning joy resounding in music and all the arts,
- it tells how God continues to speak to the world through the inspiration of writers and all other artists,
- how His goodness is revealed through advances in all fields of education and human knowledge
- it tells of the birth and death of his people and the brief but poignant witnesses of those they loved and who loved them
- it even tells of the people rejoice in the pleasures of life God gave them – in recreation and leisure.

The Easter *morning news* is the story of a new day, a new life - every day! And just as astounding, just as miraculous as it was on that first early morning, when one believer told another: “did you hear the news? Christ is risen!”

*Amen.*