

This day, The Sunday of the Resurrection is not only the most important day of the church year, it's also the only one that is set by the moon. Easter always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon, on or after the spring equinox. As complicated as that sounds, it makes ancient sense, because Easter coincides with the greening of the earth. Christ is risen and the whole world comes to life. Sap rises in the dormant trees –There are robins and tulips and daffodils, the forsythia blooms. For the most part the connection is a happy one, guaranteed to renew our faith in the creative power of God.

It is also a misleading one because spring is entirely natural... Buy a daffodil bulb in the fall and it's nothing in your hand -- looks like a shriveled onion. But don't worry: All you have to do is bury it and wait. And along about this time, it will escape the earth and explode with beauty and color. It's miraculous -- but entirely natural. The miracle and the beauty we see as the world comes alive again, is all natural.

Resurrection, on the other hand is entirely unnatural. When a human being goes into the ground that is that. You do not wait around for a person to reappear so you can pick up where you left off – not this side of the grave, anyway. You say goodbye, you reach closure, you pay your respects, and you go on with your life as best you can. You go on knowing that the only place springtime happens in a cemetery is on **top** of the graves, not in them...

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb... I can't help but think she had come to reach closure -- to pay her respects in the custom of the time -- and to move on, as best she could.

But something was wrong. The stone was rolled away. The body was gone but the wrappings were there. And then after the disciples had come and gone, Mary looked again, and there were two angels.

The other gospels report that everyone was frightened, and understandably so: To expect a sealed tomb and find it opened and filled with angels. To hunt the past and discover the future. To seek a corpse and actually meet the risen Lord. None of this is all that natural.

Death is natural, grief is natural, loss is natural, but this morning, we find the stone rolled away to reveal the highly unnatural truth: ***That by the light of this day, God has planted a seed of life in us that cannot be killed.***

By the light of this day, God has given us a way and a truth and a light to walk in. Simply put, that if we depend on him and accept his help and guidance there is nothing we cannot do: move mountains, banish fear, love our enemies, change the world, – even live with ourselves and others in joy and peace and generosity.

And it our pleasure this morning, to welcome Aislyn onto that way with us, this morning...

Or maybe it would be more accurate to say that we are confirming Aislyn in her presence on the way with us..

We all know Aislyn. We've enjoyed the life she brings to our midst We've seen her running around after church. We've seen her kneeling at the altar rail for communion -- seen her

taking part in church school. Aislyn's a part of us already. She has grown into being a part of us and will continue to grow into being a part of us. So in a way, baptizing her is simply a way of confirming a process that has been taking place over a period of time – to point to and celebrate the action of God that has been at work in her -- and all of us -- for a while drawing her and Ginny into our family.

She's a kid with a lot of growing and learning yet to do and she's undertaking something that none of us can do without God's help. She certainly doesn't have all the answers about life and faith, but neither do I.

There are those who would tell you that that's not enough, that she has to KNOW what this is all about and that she has to have had some kind of a predetermined spiritual experience that has MADE her to know what this is all about, in order to be baptized, and to be fair, I'd have to say that Scripture gives about as much support to that view as it does to the baptism of babies.

So, what's true about baptism of adults or baptism of children and babies?

Both. We simply acknowledge that God doesn't act the same with each of us.

True there are people who come to a sudden clear understanding of their relationship with God – his action in their lives – their place in the world – and their unique place in God's love.

True also, that there are those who enter the family of the faith just like children enter their human families: as babies – and they're raised and nurtured and formed as Christians over a period of time, with the result that they have a clear understanding of their relationship with God – his action in their lives – their place in the world – and their unique place in God's love.

When Aislyn, here is baptized, she'll answer the questions, herself. But: Her sponsors and family will also answer with and for her.. Because that's how we live. It's never a cut and dried proposition: And to say that it is — well it's just not reasonable. God is not impressed by our efforts to produce the final answer --- because the answer will never take the place of the relationship.

But one thing is sure: And that is the relationship: That God is and will be with us. That God is and will be for us. That God does and will surround us with his grace and love in ways that we can only guess at and will never be able to fully describe.

And our part in all this: To love and to be loved – welcome all who would join us in sharing that love – to honor and accept the holy where we find it, not being too caught up in trying to define it or capture it.

Well, In short, listen to the words of this Easter baptism: Then go out and live them.

In Jesus name,

Amen