May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

Christ is Risen, He is Risen Indeed!

I am always a bit relieved when our gospel reading for Easter is from St. Luke. He is the only one of the gospel writers to say that the women’s news of Jesus’ being raised sounded to the apostles like “*an idle tale*” (Lk 24, 11). I like that. I like that the apostles thought this was “*an idle tale*.”

I’ve done enough funerals and had enough friends and loved ones die that I get why it sounds like “*an idle tale*.” This story just doesn’t make sense. It doesn’t fit my experience with death and I’ll bet it doesn’t fit yours either. Something about it didn’t match the apostles’ experience either.

Sometimes it does seem like “*an idle tale*,” sort of like looking at pictures of and hearing about somebody else’s summer vacation. You know what that’s like, right? Good for them, what about me? Good for Jesus, what about us? What good is it to us if Jesus has been raised and we are not?

I wonder, though, if we often misunderstand this story as being unique and exclusive to Jesus. What if it was never intended to be primarily about Jesus? Maybe this story is as much or more about what is happening to us as it is what happened to Jesus.

I don’t know what happened that first Easter Day. I don’t know how whatever did happen happened. But I have come to believe that this story is less about explaining, understanding, making sense of, or even believing what happened that day, and more about experiencing what that day means for you and me today. So I want to tell you three things I think this story means for us.

* First, it means a promise. It promises a future. The promise means we can never say about our life, “This is it,” “This is all there is,” or “This is how it will always be.” Our resurrection is not a future event, something yet to happen. It is a present and every day reality that promises us a future and the chance that this moment will be transformed and changed. Alleluia! Christ is risen.
* Second, it means we have hope. It means we have hope for our lives and the lives of those we love. We have hope that our lives matter. It means we have hope in the midst of our doubts and uncertainties, when nothing makes sense and the odds are against us. Alleluia! Christ is risen.
* Third, it means a call. The resurrection is a calling on our lives. And this call awaits our response. We are being called to appreciate the opportunities of every moment given us and to neither waste nor take for granted a single one. We are being called to live more fully alive and take the risk that there is always more life awaiting us even when it is unimaginable, unforeseeable, and seemingly impossible. The resurrection is calling us into life, more life, a new life. It is God’s yes to us, by saying, “Yes.” Yes to life. Yes to more life. Yes to a new life. Alleluia! Christ is risen.

A promise, a hope, and a call. That’s what our resurrected life looks like.

Regardless of who you are, what you’ve done or not done, what has or has not happened in your life, what you believe or don’t believe, the promise remains, hope abides, and the call persists.

So, back to where we started. Is today’s story true or is it just “an idle tale?” I think that’s up to us. It is as true as we will let it be. Every time we claim the promise, hope against and hope, and say yes to life, this story is no longer just “an idle tale.” It becomes the truth of our lives, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, not because we can prove, understand, or explain it but because we are living it right here, right now. That’s what I want, don’t you?

I want to live this story. I want to do the truth of this story every day. I want to be the truth of this story. And I want you to as well. This is our day for a new life, for more life. And there is nothing holding us back. The tomb is empty and “*he is not here, but has risen*” (Lk 25, 5).

Alleluia! Christ is risen. Amen. Happy Easter and God Bless.