

EASTER, APRIL 20, 2014

ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO I GOT THIS IDEA TO PLAY THE SONG

"MORNING HAS BROKEN" AS PART OF MY HOMILY FOR EASTER....

I LOVE THAT SONG...

ALWAYS HAVE SINCE MY DAYS IN THE SEMINARY WHEN CAT STEVENS

CAME OUT WITH A RENDITION OF IT OVER 40 YEARS AGO...

I WASN'T SURE HOW I WOULD USE IT BUT IT JUST SEEMED APPROPRIATE

FOR EASTER...

SO I MADE ARRANGEMENTS WITH TEESIE FOR USING IT BEFORE THE

HOMILY....

THEN A COUPLE WEEKS AGO I FOUND MY CD COPY OF IT...

I HAD LOST IT IN MY MOVE DURING THE PAST YEAR....

I FIGURED THAT WAS A GOOD SIGN

SO I STARTED PLAYING IT - SOME TIMES I WOULD JUST PLAY THAT SONG

OVER AND OVER - I LOVED IT SO MUCH.....

AND IT GIVES ME A LIFT, ESPECIALLY IN THE MORNING

I STARTED DOING THAT WHEN I LIVED AT MERCY SIENA SEVERAL YEARS

AGO....

IN FACT, WHILE THERE I DECIDED THAT IS THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT

MY FUNERAL - I LOVED IT SO MUCH -

AND IT SEEMS SO APPROPRIATE FOR A FUNERAL THAT LOOKS TO THE

RESURRECTION AND A NEW DAY..

I WAS INVOLVED IN A LOT OF FUNERAL PREPARATIONS - AND REALLY APPRECIATED IT WHEN THE PERSON HAD DONE SOME PREPARATION....

I MUST ADMIT THAT WAS AS FAR AS I GOT HOWEVER.....

PREPARING FOR ONE'S FUNERAL IS NOT AN EASY TASK....

THEN ON GOOD FRIDAY OF THIS WEEK I BEGAN SOME SERIOUS PREPARATION FOR THIS HOMILY....

I READ A COMMENTARY FOR EASTER SUNDAY 2008 AND THERE WAS A MENTION OF THE SONG, "MORNING HAS BROKEN"

I THOUGHT WOW! THAT'S GREAT

IT SAID...ELEANOR FARJEON WAS AN ENGLISH WRITER PRIMARILY OF CHILDREN'S STORIES....

IN 1931 SHE WROTE WORDS THAT WERE SET TO AN OLD GAELIC TUNE - BUNESSAN....

IT WAS CALLED "A MORNING SONG - FOR THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING" AND IT HAS BECOME THE POPULAR HYMN WE KNOW AS "MORNING HAS BROKEN".....

SO THEN I DECIDED TO LOOK BACK OVER MY PREVIOUS EASTER SUNDAY HOMILIES TO GIVE ME SOME MORE IDEAS....

I BEGAN WITH MY HOMILY FOR EASTER SUNDAY 2008 AND I WAS STUNNED TO SEE THERE THAT I BEGAN THE HOMILY WITH CHARLIE BANE SINGING "MORNING HAS BROKEN".....

*I HAD ABSOLUTELY NO MEMORY OF THAT....HOPEFULLY, YOU DON'T
EITHER...*

*THEN I NOTED THE DATE OF EASTER SUNDAY FOR THAT YEAR 2008 - IT
WAS MARCH 23 RD....*

*AND I REALIZED I HAD MY HEART ATTACK ONE WEEK LATER -
APRIL 1, 2008.....(NO APRIL FOOL'S DAY FOR ME)*

*PERHAPS THAT IS A REASON I HAD FORGOTTEN IT - I HAVE NO IDEA....
BUT BY THEN WE WERE ALL SET TO DO IT AGAIN....*

*I GUESS ALL THAT IS TO EXPLAIN WHY I AM ONCE MORE ASKING
CHARLIE BANE TO BEGIN THE EASTER SUNDAY HOMILY WITH A
RENDITION OF MORNING HAS BROKEN".....*

*SO, WE ARE DOING IT AGAIN BECAUSE MY MEMORY IS NOT WHAT IT USE
TO BE*

*BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT CONTAINS AN IMPORTANT EASTER
MESSAGE FOR EACH ONE OF US....*

LET'S LISTEN....AND FOLLOW ALONG ON P. 756 OF GATHER

*WILLIAM JAMES IS OFTEN DESCRIBED AS THE FIRST AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGIST - HE TAUGHT AT HARVARD MOST OF HIS LIFE AND DIED
IN 1910. EVIDENTLY AS A YOUNG MAN HE HAD LITTLE INTEREST IN
ETERNAL LIFE - NOT TOO UNUSUAL*

*AS HE GREW OLDER, HOWEVER, IT BECAME MORE IMPORTANT - AS IT
DOES FOR MOST OF US. AND HE WROTE ABOUT IT QUITE OFTEN...*

SOMEONE ASK HIM WHY AND HE REPLIED....

"BECAUSE I AM JUST NOW GETTING FIT TO LIVE"....

A GREAT ANSWER.....I WOULD SAY....

AS WE GROW OLDER MOST OF US GROW A LITTLE WISER, MORE ABLE TO APPRECIATE LIFE AND LIVE IT MORE FULLY AND FREELY....

IN GENERAL, THE LONGER WE LIVE, THE BETTER PREPARED WE ARE TO LIVE....

WHEN WE ARE JUST BEGINNING TO LEARN HOW TO DO IT RIGHT IS NOT THE TIME TO END THE STORY - DON'T YOU THINK - IT NEEDS TO BE CONTINUED...

THAT'S WHAT EASTER IS ABOUT....

WE NEVER FEEL THE FULL IMPACT OF DEATH UNTIL IT TOUCHES SOMEONE W LOVE....

THEN IT BECOMES A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN....

WE CANNOT BE INDIFFERENT ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM...

THEY ARE TOO SIGNIFICANT AND TOO PRECIOUS TO US...

IT IS A MATTER OF LOVE....

IT IS NOT ABOUT US.....IT IS ABOUT OUR LOVED ONES...

THIS WAS THE CONCERN OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES....

IN THIS MAN CHRIST THEY HAD SEEN THE START OF SOMETHING WONDERFUL....

SUDDENLY, IT CAME TO A SCREECHING HALT....

EVERYONE BELIEVED IT WAS OVER....END OF THE STORY.

WE KNOW THAT BECAUSE THE FIRST REACTION IN ALL FOUR GOSPELS

*TO THE RESURRECTION WAS NOT JOY BUT FEAR, SHOCK, CONFUSION,
DISBELIEF....*

*WE SEE THAT VERY CLEARLY E.G. IN MARY MAGDALEN IN TODAY'S
GOSPEL STORY...SHE WENT TO THE TOMB AND FOUND THE STONE
ROLLED AWAY....SHE GOES AND REPORTS TO PETER AND JOHN THAT
SOMEONE MOVED THE BODY....EVEN LATER THE RISEN CHRIST APPEARS
TO MARY MAGDALEN AT THE TOMB AND AT FIRST SHE DIDN'T
RECOGNIZE HIM, ASSUMING THAT HE WAS THE GARDENER.....
EVENTUALLY THEY REALIZED IT WAS NOT THE END OF THE
STORY....*

*PETER SAYS IN OUR FIRST READING "THEY KILLED HIM FINALLY,
HANGING HIM ON A TREE, ONLY TO HAVE GOD RAISE HIM UP ON THE
THIRD DAY."*

AND THEN JOY FOLLOWS FEAR, CONFUSION AND DISBELIEF.....

*THE REALIZATION THAT MORNING HAS BROKEN LIKE THE FIRST
MORNING...*

THAT OURS IS THE SUNLIGHT, OURS IS THE MORNING...

PRAISE WITH ELATION, PRAISE EVERY MORNING....

GOD'S RECREATION OF THE NEW DAY....

THAT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE TRUE FOR US TOO.....

WE WILL NEED TO EXPERIENCE THE PAIN, THE LOSS, THE DARKNESS

FEAR, THE CONFUSION, THE DISORIENTATION FIRST BUT WE CAN BEGIN

*TO SING OUT TODAY OUR BELIEF THAT EASTER IS INDEED GOD'S
RECREATION OF A NEW DAY....*