What have the past two weeks been like for you? Have you seen and experienced resurrection in your life? What does it look like? Here’s why I’m asking. Two weeks ago we celebrated the day of Jesus’ resurrection. Two weeks ago the stone was rolled away, the tomb was found to be empty, and Jesus was seen alive. And some more questions, are we more alive now? What difference has the resurrection made in us? I am not asking about what difference it might make in some distant heavenly future. I am asking about our lives today, here, now.

I sometimes wonder if we just read the story of the resurrection and don’t recognize it in our own lives. I wonder if we read about the rolled away stone, about the empty tomb, and about Jesus being alive that we fail to recognize the resurrections in our lives. We look for and expect it to be an equally big deal kind of thing in our lives. Maybe that’s the problem. Maybe that’s why it’s sometimes difficult to recognize the resurrections in our lives here and now.

Please don’t think that “Gordon said the resurrection isn’t a big deal.” That’s not what I am saying. What I am saying is that maybe, the resurrection still happens in the small details of everyday life. The empty tomb experienced in the ordinary circumstances of life. Jesus being alive revealed in the routine rhythms of our everyday lives.

John begins today’s gospel ([John 21:1-19](http://www.lectionarypage.net/YearC_RCL/Easter/CEaster3_RCL.html#gsp1)) by telling us that Jesus “showed himself in this way.” So he sets the third appearance of Jesus to his disciples amidst ordinary circumstances. He returns the disciples to their old routine of fishing. He gives a lot of small, seemingly unnecessary, and even strange details. John could just have easily said, “While the disciples were fishing they saw Jesus on the shore. but he didn’t. Instead, John focuses on the details in which Jesus showed himself; so maybe we should too.

The disciples have returned home. They’ve moved from the empty tomb to their boats, from the house in Jerusalem to the familiar waters of the Sea of Tiberias. They’ve traveled some 70 or 80 miles from the place of Jesus’ resurrection and given themselves over to their old routine of fishing. They’ve returned to the same boats, the same nets, the same water, the same everyday work. That’s when and where Jesus “showed himself.”

As I said at the beginning of this message, It’s now two weeks after Easter Sunday and I’m betting we’ve all returned to the routine of our lives. That’s when and where we can expect Jesus to show himself to us. Resurrection does not happen apart from the routines of life, but in them. Resurrection is not about escaping life but about becoming alive. The disciples fished through the darkness but their nets were empty. We are told “That night they caught nothing.” The darkness, however was not just about the night sky. The darkness was also in the disciples. They are as empty as their nets. Who here hasn’t experienced that darkness and emptiness? We know what it’s like.

You work, you do your best but you still come up empty. In those times we have come to the limits of our own self-sufficiency. We have nothing to show for our efforts and nothing left to give. We’re empty. That’s when Jesus, shows himself and says, “My Children, you have no fish, have you?” That’s not so much a question as it is a statement. Within Jesus’ words we hear the echo of Mary’s voice at the wedding in Cana when she said to Jesus, “They have no wine” (John 2:3). Empty nets. Empty jars. No wine, no fish, no life. That’s when Jesus showed himself.

Nets and jars cannot be filled unless they are first emptied. In the same way we can never be filled with Jesus until we are first emptied of ourselves, until we come to recognize the limits of our own self [sufficiency. The emptiness is not the end or a failure but a beginning.](https://interruptingthesilence.com/2013/01/20/wine-time-a-sermon-on-john-21-11/) [Jesus shows up when we are empty.](https://interruptingthesilence.com/2013/01/20/wine-time-a-sermon-on-john-21-11/)

So let me ask you this. What are your empty nets today? What wine jars have run dry? Don’t throw the jars away and don’t abandon your nets. They are the very places Jesus is showing himself to you. They will be places of resurrection, jars overflowing with the best wine and nets filled with large fish to gladden our hearts and to nourish our lives.

[Did you notice in our Gospel passage that all this happens just after daybreak?](https://interruptingthesilence.com/2016/03/31/resurrection-the-first-day-stories-of-our-life-an-easter-sermon-on-luke-241-12/) My friends, the darkness never prevails in the light of a new day. We are told in John 1: 5, “A light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it”. In the light of a full net, in the light of lots of fish Jesus shows himself. This isn’t just about the rising of the sun in the sky. It’s about the rising of the Son of God in the darkness of the disciples’ lives and in the darkness of our lives. Whatever darkness tries to overcome us, whatever darkness we might be going through today, that darkness is the circumstances in which Jesus will show himself to us. It is the context for our resurrection and the raw material from which new life will be fashioned.

We might take note that as soon as Jesus is recognized naked Peter gets dressed and jumps in the water. We probably could have gone a long time without needing to know that Peter was naked. It’s a strange and seemingly unnecessary detail. So we have to wonder if John isn’t telling us something more than that Peter wasn’t wearing any clothes.

The last time Peter got out of the boat was preceded by him saying, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water” (Matthew 14:28). Not this time, however. Today is different. There are no conditions, no demands, no requests for a miracle. Peter simply gets dressed. I wonder though if he is doing more than clothing his nakedness. Possibly Peter is clothing himself with courage, clothing himself with joy, clothing himself with an urgency for Jesus. Fully clothed, he now plunges himself into the waters of new life.

What places or circumstances of our lives need to be clothed with courage or joy? And if they were how would that change our life? What new possibilities would open to us? What might we do differently? How would that change our relationships or our outlook on life and the world? What does a life clothed in courage, joy, and urgency for Christ mean for us?

Whatever our answers might be they are the places and ways in which Jesus is showing himself to us. And here’s another little detail John offers us. Jesus is never far away. This is what today’s gospel has been about? It’s the same story being told through the many different details and circumstances of our lives. Jesus showed himself in the empty nets that were filled with large fish, the darkness that gave way to light, nakedness that was clothed. Resurrection is in the details. That’s true in today’s gospel and in our lives. The gospel details are our life’s details. It’s as if John has given us a paper with a bunch of dots on it, each one a particular detail or circumstance, and now our work is to connect the dots with the lines of our lives. And when we do we discover resurrection. We discover that we have a future, and that our lives have been guaranteed by Christ’s life, and, thanks be to God, he has shown himself to each of us in the normalcy of our lives. AMEN