
On Easter Morning

An article from the *Cathedral Times*.

Ever since this past Easter morning, I have been seeing photographs, watching social videos, and reading comments about the beauty of that day. Our own community, the Cathedral Parish of St. Philip, was certainly glorious; and so were lots of other holy places around the Christian world. In newspapers, on television, and on social media sites, I saw tremendous floral displays, I heard gorgeous choral music, and I read some inspiring words.

At 5:20 a.m. on Easter morning, I sneaked into our own place and took my usual photograph of the nave and altar. That has become a special moment for me. While we are outside waiting to begin the Easter Vigil so early in the morning, I feel as if the building itself is waiting in vigil for us.

This year, it was the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins that came to me during that moment:

*There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.*

Yes, the morning was ready to spring for us. The Holy Ghost was brooding over us.

But, you know what?

Easter needed us. None of the churches or flowers or music or sermons would have meant a thing if we had not shown up. Many of the photographs of Easter scenery are beautiful; but unless they show actual people, they are still incomplete.

Easter is about us. Easter is about people, ordinary people, being brought to life.

So, what I give the most thanks for this Easter is YOU, you who showed up. You prepared the flowers and music and words and children and parents!—and you showed up. Your presence, your bodies, made a difference.

Yes, my most powerful Easter moment was gazing out into the beautiful congregation of the Cathedral Parish of St. Philip. Over and over again. All morning. I am not sure many photographers and social videographers were there to capture it from my angle, but I sure remember it. You were lovely; you were absolutely lovely. And you still are! Thank you.

