

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen

Imagine a man who saw his friend welcomed into a city with Palms and shouts of Hosanna. This same man that we picture also learns later in the week during a dinner that his dear friend would die. The man felt great anxiety about the events that were going to occur and swore that he would stand by his friend and even die with him if necessary.

This man that I've asked you to imagine is Simon Peter. Peter struggled with Jesus' words. He did not want his friend to die, and yet he swore to Jesus that he would stand by him. Jesus' response to Peter probably wasn't what he expected. Peter was going to deny knowing Jesus three times before the rooster crowed.

We have a lot to learn from Peter. This week is the week of all weeks for Christians. It's the week that we remember the last meal that Jesus shared with his disciples, his death on a cross, and on Easter his resurrection and victory over death. It's a week worth sharing with others.

I've always learned something different each time I read the passion narratives. Peter was afraid. He denied Jesus and when the rooster crowed he wept because he remembered Jesus' words to him. Peter denied Jesus, but Peter also strengthened the community after Jesus' death. Jesus prayed for Peter. He prayed that his faith wouldn't fail and that he would strengthen the community.

Even though Peter didn't understand all that was happening around him during the last few days of Jesus' life he shared the good news of Christ after his death and resurrection and strengthened the Christian community.

We too can strengthen and grow the Christian community by sharing the news of Jesus death and resurrection. Unlike Peter, we have a different viewpoint. Ours is a post-resurrection view. We know that Jesus overcame death. And because Jesus overcame death we have hope. Hope in God, hope in everlasting life. Jesus died and was resurrected so that we might have life. What a powerful story to share with others, especially during Holy week.

We can invite others to participate in Holy Week services with us. We could share the Easter story with those who have not heard it. Or we might talk about the story and what God has done for us as we gather together with family and friends to celebrate Easter. We have a variety of options to share this story both with those who haven't heard it and those who have heard it and love it.

This is the week of all weeks for Christians. Will we share the life-changing story of Jesus' death and resurrection?

Now the peace of God which surpasses all human understanding be in your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus the Lord. Amen.