

EASTER SUNDAY:

April 5, 2026

I would like to share a story with you. It is not like the childhood stories at Easter that I learned, such as Peter Rabbit and Farmer McGregor. This story is from the autobiography of Caryll Houselander, an English woman who lived in the 20th century and was an artist, a mystic, poet and writer. Here is what she wrote:

“I was in an underground train, a crowded train in which all sorts of people jostled together, sitting or strap-hanging – workers of every description going home at the end of the day. Quite suddenly I saw with my mind, but as vividly as a wonderful picture, Christ in them all. But I saw more than that, not only was Christ in every one of them, living in them, dying in them, rejoicing in them, sorrowing in them – but because He was in them and because they were here, the whole world was here too, here in this train; not only the world as it was at that moment, not only all the peoples in all the countries of the world, but all those people who had lived in the past, and all those yet to come....”

The author continues that she emerged from the underground and continued to see this vision for two more days, perhaps then never again. I am suggesting that she had an encounter with the Risen Christ. She was a mystic, an ordinary human person that was open to see the unity of all creation. Mystics are people who are open to really hear all that happens, to see all that really is before them which is seeing things in their wholeness, their connection, their universal and divine frame. The Risen Christ has filled the universe and is present in everyone and to everything.

What do you think as you hear this? Do you dismiss me as being a bit daffy? Or do you recognize that you have had such moments, probably passing and elusive? This can't be real; this can't be me. But maybe it was quite real.

We tend to think of the resurrection of Christ as an event that happened two thousand years ago. Jesus got up in his tomb and walked out. That's not how the scriptures talk about it. It was not a one time event but a new creation in which the human Jesus took on a new body, that of the entire cosmos. So we speak of the Risen Christ as a present reality. We do not say Christ has risen but Christ is risen.

Peter, John, Mary Magdalen, whom we meet in today's gospel story, as well as all the early Christians, had to learn what Risen Christ meant. They reflected on Jesus words, "Whatever you do to the least of my brothers or sisters, you do to me".

Likewise, as Saint Paul was on the road to Damascus he heard a voice, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me". Paul, still known then as Saul, asked the voice "who are you?" The response was "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting". This encounter with the Risen Christ whom Paul would begin to see in everyone and everything marked his life from that time on. We are the descendants, the heirs of these Christians.

This focus on the universal Christ, the cosmic Christ, the Christ of everyday and every time, would become the core of the Christian story. It is unfortunate that this central reality has often been lost in the Church and in how Christians live their faith.

Where do we find the Risen Lord? Since Christ is in us and we are in Christ, we find him everywhere. We find the Risen Lord in our families, in our babies, our children, in sick members. We find the Risen Lord in our local communities. We find Christ in politicians and public figures who we may detest. We find Christ in the migrant, the immigrant, the prisoner. We find the Risen Christ in the Eucharist whenever we come to Mass. We find Christ everywhere. Our call is to get over our dualistic way of breaking down our differences into them and us. We are all one.

And, sometimes, if we slow down, find silence in our lives, learn to really listen to what is within us and around us, then we might well see Christ in everyone as Caryll Houselander did. Christ is alive. Christ is truly Risen.

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