

The Royals were winning 2-0 in the top of the 9<sup>th</sup> when I shut the radio off to get things ready for Holy Thursday this week. I sacrifice a lot during Lent. As I walked across Cedar Street, Jack and Sue Morris were sitting there inside their car. Jack rolled down the window, not to say hello, not to say happy Easter, but to tell me the score was now 2-1. I really had to get things ready for Holy Thursday, so I kept going. I wasn't worried. The Royals website sends an email to my phone immediately after every game, giving me the final score. So even though I left the game behind, I knew I would get the news. In one sense, it doesn't matter if the news is good or bad, we just like to get the news first. We won, incidentally, 2-1.

If you're the first one to hear the news, you're the first one to tell it. Usually we can't wait, especially if it's good news. Being first to hear the news makes us feel special, chosen and wise. We also become responsible to tell other people.

Both these themes – hearing good news and telling good news – are the core of the gospel for Easter. Saint Mark's account of the resurrection starts simply enough: the women have gone shopping; the stores were closed for the Sabbath, but now they're open; nothing changes. They buy spices and go to anoint the body of Jesus. But they are startled by what they see – the large stone rolled away, a young man inside, the body of Jesus gone. But they hear good news: "Jesus has been raised," and they set off to tell it.

There were skeptics. No one saw the resurrection take place; all people saw was an empty tomb. Some said the disciples stole the body. Others said Jesus didn't really die; he was wounded and escaped during the night. Still others said the women just went to the wrong tomb. The gospels take up all these theories and discard them one by one. They insist that Jesus died, that God raised him up, and the very place where they laid him was now empty. This was news, and the women were anxious to spread the word.

We have received their word. Our faith is a gift from other people who told us the good news. Our faith has grown this Lent. We have prayed more deeply and more often. We have performed works of charity for the good of others. We have learned more about our faith. We have confessed our sins. We have fasted because we believe that God is more important than anything else, even the food on our table.

We believe because God uses ordinary experiences as occasions of powerful grace, whether it's baseball or shopping. We believe because the sun rises each day with new possibilities. We believe because the risen Jesus has appeared to us in our hearts, in our homes and in our love. But most of all we believe because someone else rolled back the large stone of unbelief from our lives, because someone else told us about Jesus. Every time we share our belief, every time we give others hope, every time we roll away the large stones that keep people in the darkness of despair, every time we sing alleluia, we create new life with God, and we make that day Easter day.