



27 March 2015

Upcoming Events

Friday, 27 March – End of 3rd Quarter

Friday-Friday, 3-10 April – Spring Break! **NO SCHOOL**

Tuesday-Thursday, 14-16 April – NYS ELA Testing for 4th & 8th Grades will NOT be held this week. Grades 4 & 8 will take the Terra Nova Achievement tests with the rest of the classes later in the month.

Thursday-Friday, 16-17 April – 3rd Quarter Parent Conferences

Tuesday-Friday, 21-14 April – TerraNova Achievement Testing, Grades 1-10, NO NYS Math testing.

Wednesday, 29 April – MACSA Senior High Track Meet, Messiah College, Grantham, PA

Catastrophe and Eucatastrophe, continued

I mentioned last week that I learned a new word: "eucatastrophe." In last week's essay I described the kind of feelings that the disciples must have had about the death and burial of Jesus. He had been their teacher, mentor, and friend for three years, and now he was gone. Even more than that, they themselves may have been in danger from the Jewish leaders as followers of Jesus.

Of course, today we know that the "catastrophe" of Jesus' death was really planned from the beginning of the world to pay for our sins and make it possible for us to be reconciled to God. However, all of that was still future for the disciples during this traumatic weekend.

Then came the "eucatastrophe." The word was coined by J. R. R. Tolkien to describe a "good catastrophe." The prefix "eu-" means "good." If a catastrophe is a sudden, unexpected, terrible event, Tolkien used "eucatastrophe" to describe a sudden, unexpected, *good* event. An unexpected visit from grandma and grandpa in the DR, a \$1,000 Christmas bonus in your paycheck, or the discovery that, after years of trying, you are expecting your first child could be described as eucatastrophes.

For the disciples, and for us today, the greatest eucatastrophe of all time is the resurrection of Jesus from his grave. Imagine the surprise and shock the women experienced when they went to the tomb on Easter morning, only to discover two angels who told them that Jesus wasn't there; he was risen! Or the surprise and confusion for Peter and John when they arrived and found the tomb empty and the grave clothes lying where Jesus had lain. Think about Thomas' doubt when the disciples told him that they had seen the risen Lord and his response, "Unless I put my finger into the nail holes in his hand, and my hand into his side, I won't believe." Then a week later as the disciples are all together, Jesus shows up and invites Thomas to do just as he requested. What an amazing surprise!

This year, as we prepare for the Easter season, this story is, for some of us, "old news." We have heard it and celebrated it since we were children. Is it possible to think of it in new terms? Let's try to consider it from the viewpoint of the disciples on that first Easter morning – the shock, surprise, joy, amazement of a risen, living Savior. Paul writes that he still lives and is with the Father in heaven interceding for us, his children.

Praise God for his unspeakable gift – his eucatastrophe!

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