

**April 8, 2012
Easter**

A lady from Ireland told me a beautiful story from her childhood. In some sense it could be seen as an Easter Story.

Here is how she told it:

When I was a little girl in Ireland—perhaps four or five years old, I used to love to climb over the rock walls and roam through the fields which were every different shade of green.

One day, late in the afternoon, I looked across the field at our neighbor's white thatch roofed cottage.

When I looked at the house all of the windows were golden!

I was amazed, so I ran across the field over to our neighbor's house.

When I got there, our neighbor was standing in the doorway, so I ran up to her and said:

“Ma'am, Ma'am, do you know you live in a house with golden windows?”

She smiled at me. And just as the sun was about to set in the west, she pointed across to my house and she said,

“Yes child, I live in a house with golden windows, but look across the field, your house has golden windows too!”

And sure enough it did! So I ran back home as fast as I could and ran into the kitchen.

I tugged on my Momma's dress and said:

“Momma! Momma! We live in a house with golden windows too!”

Did not Jesus say, “Unless you become as a little child....”?

Sometimes children see what adults miss.

Easter is all about opening our eyes and seeing something new and amazing. It is about seeing the light.

Easter might be called the Feast of the Golden Sunrise.

On Good Friday, there were no golden windows. The earth shook. And as Jesus expired on the cross, Jerusalem was covered with darkness.

Shutters were closed for fear of the storm—and Peter, the first among the apostles, closed the shutters of his heart and denied Christ was the light.

However, on Easter, the rising sun fell upon the tomb of Jesus.

But when the sun rose, the rock that covered the tomb in darkness had been cast aside.

The first rays of the sun crept across the grass and then entered the tomb.

It entered what had been dark and closed and illuminated the burial cloths lying neatly folded.

Imagine the surprise of Mary and the astonishment of Peter at the empty tomb now filled with light!

For us adults there are times when we close the shutters of our hearts.

Today is a day when they need to be opened up to the Easter light.

For us adults there are times when we fail to see the beauty all around us.

Today is a day when we need to see the beautiful Easter Candle as the symbol of the risen Christ whose light dispels our darkness.

And for us adults, sometime we find it difficult to believe and to hope.

Today is the day when hope needs to be enlivened by Easter faith.

In my book, *Living in the Shadow of Terror*, I included a meditation on hope. It goes this way:

The student asked the Master, “What does hope do?”

The Master replied, “Hope pushes. Hope pulls. Hope lifts up. Hope looks ahead. Hope vaults. Hope bounces. Hope skips. Hope dances. Hope gets up. Hope consoles. Hope endures. Hope springs eternal.”

Then the student asked the Master, “Is Hope always on the move?”

“No,” replied the Master, “Sometimes hope rests like an anchor in the depths of our souls.”

May the great Easter hope rest like an anchor in all our souls this Easter Day.

And we might also pray that just as our nation was successful in war, we might be even more successful in making peace.

For after all—that is the first message that came from the lips of the Risen Christ—his first priority---“Shalom! Peace!”

And when you go home today, may you all live in a house with golden windows!