

Good Friday  
4/2/21 CTK

*John 18:1 – 19:47*

Imagine that you have no hope – except in a miracle.

Imagine that you have an aging parent who lives in a nursing home and who has suddenly been taken sick by a mysterious virus that you have never heard of but which is now engulfing the world. They are so ill that they are put in ICU and are being watched 24 hours a day. They are on a respirator which is the only thing keeping them alive. The doctor tells you that the chances of your parent surviving are almost zero. You have no hope – except in a miracle.

Or imagine that you are a mother of 5 children living in a country that is being torn apart by war. The war has been going on so long that you don't remember what it is about. There are so many warring factions and so many armed groups that you can't tell one from the other. The only thing you know is that your husband has been killed and you are alone to provide for your children. Your city has been destroyed by bombs and your home is a pile of rubble. You have escaped to a refugee camp which is filthy, unhealthy and unsafe. You have heard that if you can get to the sea you may be able to get onto a boat that will take you to another country where you have a chance to build a new life. As you begin to cross the desert on the road to the sea with thousands of others, you realize your chance of survival are almost zero. You have no hope, except in a miracle.

Or imagine that you are Peter, or Mary Magdalene and you have put all your faith in Jesus of Nazareth, even begun to believe that he is the Christ. A few days ago you entered the Holy City to cheering crowds who cried out "Hosanna in the Highest" and "Hail to the Son of David." But now the crowds have turned against you, goaded on by the religious and the political authorities – the temple and the Roman Empire. Jesus has been betrayed by one of your own, arrested, tried illegally, tortured and led away to be crucified. You have gone into hiding. You vaguely remember him predicting that this would happen, and also that, whatever it means, on the third after his death he would rise again. But that's just a vague memory. For Jesus and for yourself, you have no hope. Except in a miracle.

As we listen tonight to this story of Jesus' Passion, I invite you to imagine yourself as someone who has no hope, except in a miracle. That is what this night is for. Because really, the only hope any of us has for ourselves, or for humanity, or for our planet, is a miracle. And then to remember, that the greatest miracle of all in a creation full of miracles is on its way to happening.