

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The gospel according to John, chapter 20, verse 16.

Jesus said to her "Mary"  
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He called her by her name: Mary. Quietly but confidently: Mary. Quietly but faithfully: Mary. Quietly but excitedly: Mary.

Imagine she ran to tell the disciples "I have seen Jesus". And when Peter who denied and Thomas who doubted and John who regretted – when they said how do you know it is our Lord Jesus. Mary said:

"He calls me by my name".

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As surely as the Bishop will call Josh and Geoffrey in a few minutes time to confirm their faith so the Lord Jesus calls me by my name, quietly, confidently, faithfully, deep, deep, within our hearts through the denials, in the doubts, with the regrets quietly, confidently, faithfully Jesus calls me by my name – there is the resurrection in our hearts and in our lives today. There is the power of Almighty God who shows himself in the love which makes sense of the denial, the doubt, the regrets, makes sense of who I really am. The story of Jesus' resurrection is the story of the Love which bursts out of the tomb of denial, doubt, regret. The tomb we hew for ourselves out of the rocks of our own personalities. Quietly, confidently, faithfully, the Holy Spirit stirs deep, deep, deep, in our hearts because He calls me by my name: Josh, Geoffrey, Norman, Lilian, Neil, Morag – He calls me by my name.

Jesus said to her: "Mary". Quietly, confidently, faithfully but the excitement of Jesus' resurrection, the excitement lies in the quiet, confident, faithful love, love which is God, love which makes sense of the who and what I am. That is the joy of resurrection, that is the glory of this Easter Day, Alleluia the church's way of saying: Hooray because He calls me by my name as surely as Jesus said to her: Mary.

But what of Peter who denied, Thomas who doubted, John who regretted. He calls me by my name but what is my name?

Denial, cynic Peter denied; he was so disappointed, so lonely in the courtyard, so full of fear – we know when we are in a state of denial when we become cynical. Well if God is God then why doesn't He act and it's always He the cynic is the person who is determined never to be disappointed again, real denial we hide in the tomb of fear, welfare benefits are for scroungers, the Health Service is in melt down, banks are crooks. Face the fear, and burst out of the tomb. Jesus' resurrection shows, love is known, when we face reality: Of people on benefits but where are the jobs?, there are doctors who worry about their parents, carers who are not ashamed of incontinence pads, teachers who have their pupils' best interests at heart. Priests who say their prayers, quietly, faithfully, He calls me by my name to face the fear, engage with the world, quietly, confidently, faithfully. Resurrection.

Jesus said to her "Mary"

But what of Thomas the Doubt. There is the sign of God active in our lives. Doubt questions, which seem to cause such turbulence but read the Bible. The waters of chaos, the disciples running around not knowing what would happen next always the sign of the Holy Spirit is turbulence. Doubts, questions are like temptations they are individually tailored – Jesus, He calls me by my name.

Have faith in your doubts, God is with us, Have faith in your doubts, the story of Jesus resurrection is the story of Love which is stronger than anything we experience even death itself. There is our confidence, it is worth being faithful, have faith in your doubts there is the excitement of faith, love, resurrection.

He calls me by name: John the Regret.

Regret the what might have been if onlys.

John the only disciple at the crucifixion, John who reclined on Jesus' breast. Why so much fear at the physical nature of relationship.

John, faithful but at the foot of the cross, so many regrets, what might have been if only.

And yet by tradition Jesus from the cross said to John – Behold your mother. In the midst of the disappointment, failure, loneliness –

“He calls me by my name”

Quietly but confidently, faithfully, he calls the cynic Peter, Thomas the doubt, John , what might have been if only – but the excitement, the joy, the power of the resurrection lies in the Love, Love that is of God, Love which makes sense of who I am and the world in which we live.

That is the faith, which Josh and Geoffrey will confirm in a few minutes time – The Bishop, the representative of the apostles in our day – Remember Josh and Geoffrey if people ask why you are confirmed, do you believe in God, the Holy Spirit, the resurrection, Jesus:

He calls me by my name.

And Josh and Geoffrey, you lead us this morning, you confirm our faith as young people who want to be part of this our community of faith. We will stand with you, always, always, this is your home, never ever be afraid or ashamed to ask any of us for help.

That is the excitement of Love, Love which is of God, Love which brings resurrection, new light, new life, new hope bursts from the tomb, we can leave the past behind. God gives us as many second chances as we need because Jesus quietly, confidently, faithfully

He calls me by my name.

Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia.

Bishop Kevin  
Easter Day, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013  
Cathedral, Oban