

Holy Normal

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Where will we go from this global pandemic of COVID? How will we tackle the multiple pandemics of casteism, violence, climate, and self-care in the future? What is Holy Normal? The word "*Kadosh*" in Hebrew means something sacred, "different," or "other" (set apart) - the exact opposite of something familiar. The phrase "holy normal" is an oxymoron of sorts, where differentiation is normalized. Easter is a theological intersection of the harsh realism of brokenness and the insatiable practice of beloved community here on earth, as it is in heaven.

Spiritual growth is the goal of the Christian life. Resurrection is similar to a sacramental self-actualization process, such as the one from creation to baptism and regular bread to eucharistic bread. Resurrection life is a movement from mere life to new or abundant life. Furthermore, Christ calls us to embody a resurrection ordinary or a holy normal.

During COVID-tide, we mostly want to get back to normal. We long for the familiar things of the good old pre-COVID days, however, we have changed during this time. For instance, we have seen George Floyd killed seemingly in slow motion before our eyes. We cannot go back to a normal that did not value people's dignity, mostly because we cannot un-see what we have seen. We are witnesses--all of us. We are held accountable by the teenager's steady hand that recorded this tortured death, which is an icon of America's original sin of racism. But of course, racism is not America's franchise or even monopoly. The virus of racial discrimination has been around for much longer than the reality of America. Augustine's original sin was foundational in its assumption that superiority, and supremacy is the root cause of racial and other forms of discrimination. Caste is a graded hierarchical system. Its basis includes, divine will, heritability, endogamy, purity and pollution, occupation, dehumanization, cruelty as control, and superior/inferiority. Christ as archetype presents an incarnation about living into the innate image of God in every human Being. Racial discrimination is a caste system in our lands. The risen Christ and his way of love are our way out of this caste fog. Can we make this our Holy Normal?

Over COVID-tide, I stopped driving around like a maniac. We realized that we could meet, worship, and even do our business, most often online. With time, practice and expertise, we have even started doing these well. In the process, we have cut our carbon footprint considerably as institutions. The resurrection life, perhaps like Zoom, reminds us of our transcendence over limitations of time, space, and buildings. In this holy normal, we, too, know how to communicate, be the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion, and do our business while reducing our carbon footprint as good stewards of our environment. Can we make this our holy normal?

Finally, during COVID-tide, I discovered that I could start and tend to a garden, take walks, eat better, pay closer attention to those around me. Will I make this and all these my "holy normal" going forward? Will we be witnesses who honor the dead by how we will live beyond this COVID-tide? It does not need to be all or nothing, but a natural Anglican way of being balanced about this holy normal.