

**MASS OF RESURRECTION: MARGARET MARY (PEG) DOLAN, R.S.H.M.  
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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2009**

I don't normally write out my homily. Normally I speak without notes, from my memory and, I try, my heart.

But today, like each of you, my memory is so full and my heart so heavy that I don't trust any of this to come out clearly without a text.

This is in many ways my least important sermon. Far more important are your thoughts. So, this sermon is intentionally brief and, although you don't need my permission, I explicitly invite you to let your thoughts wander as I speak, wander into your own heart and into your own memories of Peg.

I've made a fundamental decision. Peg would want me to talk about God, but God would want me to talk about Peg. Surprisingly, for a Jesuit, I'm going to listen to God! To talk about Peg is to talk about love, quite fundamentally her love for each of us. So this homily has just one point -- love.

The journey of love isn't easy. There's a frequent detour most of us take. In trying to love others we quickly, unsuspectingly, end up trying to turn them into our fantasy of what they should be, rather than quietly, respectfully getting a sense of them, listening to them, listening to them as they change over time, and helping them to grow gracefully into who God dreams them to be, not what we dream them to be.

Peg didn't take this detour. She accepted us, respected us, loved us for who we are, while challenging us to be fully ourselves in God's light. She simply wanted each of us, in our own way "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with [our]God."

As I've thought about Peg I've thought about Mary, mother of Jesus. If you look at Mary in the Gospel, she is a person who, although busy and hard-working, stands back, ponders, treasures in her heart. She struggled we sense, to understand her own Son and not to turn him into everyone's fantasy for him. She loved her Son in all his divine – human complexity.

The only difference between Peg and Mary is that Peg seemed to understand us without a struggle.

And in Peg's face we saw more than Peg. We saw God. Despite all our talk about how God loves us, how difficult it is for us to feel that. We don't touch God, and God doesn't touch us. But in Peg's love for us we received something of the "power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is this breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge." When Peg smiled at us we felt God smiling on us.

**Well, Peg has won, yet again: we've ended up talking about God! Augustan wrote that "to fall in love with God is the greatest of all romances, to seek Him the greatest adventure, to find Him the greatest achievement." Peg's life was a romance, an adventure, an achievement. She became like the God she loved and touched each of us with God's love, as well as her own.**

### SOMETIMES

Sometimes things don't go, after all,  
from bad to worse. Some years, muscadel  
faces down frost; green thrives; the crops don't fail.  
Sometimes a man aims high, and all goes well.

A people sometimes will step back from war,  
elect an honest man, decide they care  
enough, that they can't leave some stranger poor.  
Some men become what they were born for.

Sometimes our best intentions do not go  
amiss; sometimes we do as we meant to.  
The sun will sometimes melt a field of sorrow  
that seemed hard frozen; may it happen for you.

- Sheenagh Pugh

**Sometimes a saint smiles on us so that we might have life. It has happened for us. And now Peg has that same life to the full.**