



The power of suggestion: Once something is implanted in your mind, you see it everywhere. Try it – there are crosses everywhere you look. In the mullions that divide the window panes. In the way the street signs intersect with their posts. In two pens dropped on your desk. In the plaid of your shirt. In the cells of the Excel Spread Sheet on your computer. Everywhere.

That has been my experience during Lent, as we explored some of the different stories that have been borrowed to explain what happened on the cross. We talked about the metaphor of a military victory. We talked about the metaphor of being freed from slavery. We talked about the metaphor of being purified by a sacrifice. Poof! Every hymn, every scripture, every news story suddenly holds echoes of these stories. Everywhere I look, I find Jesus' cross – or rather, Jesus' crosses.

I find them especially in Holy Week and Easter. On Palm Sunday, Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey....oh look! It's a parody of a military general's victory parade, reminding us that Jesus is a victor, but not the type we are used to. In the Communion Service of Maundy Thursday, Jesus broke bread and lifted cups of wine....oh look! It is a way of finding his story in the Passover story of the exodus from Egyptian slavery. On Good Friday, all eyes are on the cross where Jesus hangs, dying....oh look! It is the very model of the temple sacrifice, but one that marks an end of sacrifice.

And on Easter, the cross is empty, the tomb is empty....oh look! The cross may mark the center point, the "crux" of the story, but it is far from over. Jesus' power was not completed in the cross, any more than his life was ended there. Jesus is very much alive and with us, even today.

Have you started seeing those crosses yet? Have you started seeing Jesus' cross around you? In the non-violent overthrow of an Egyptian dictator, I see Christ the Victor. In the anguished story of one who has overcome addiction, I see Christ the Liberator. In the outpouring of gifts to help those in Japan, I see a sacrificial giving of self so that others might live.

And in the resilience of so many in our congregation who fight through illness and injury and loss, I see the strength that comes from knowing God With Us in all that life offers.

May you be surrounded by the crosses of Christ wherever you turn. May you be uplifted by the resurrection wherever you find yourself.