



BUNNIES AND NAILS

By Joan Carey | Photo by Patricia Photography



Once again, I am conflicted about this time of year.

I'm a sucker for Easter décor. I'll take a basket of eggs and grass over a fat Santa any day. A marshmallow Peep or fruitcake? It's a no brainer. I love the pastel colors, the tulips and hyacinths and the fuzzy bunnies.

This seems a contradiction since my bin of Easter decorations still sits undisturbed in my basement.

I have pulled the bin off the shelf and opened the lid but just don't feel right bringing out the bunnies and eggs, not just yet. This is where the conflict comes in. It all started one Friday quite a few years ago.

I was sitting at Good Friday service waiting for it to begin and an elderly woman came into the pew and walked right up to me and quietly asked me if I could move over because I was in her spot. For a brief nanosecond I was afraid of what was going to come out of my mouth, but before I could roll my eyes or sarcastically ask her

for proof of her ownership she said, "I grieve better in my spot."

I had never heard anyone talk about grieving the death of Jesus, like he was a family member or dear friend. I slid over physically and something in me slid over spiritually.

That encounter had a powerful effect on me. I didn't really know it at the time, but it stuck with me and moved me another space on my path to knowing Jesus more intimately. I still can't fully wrap my head around the immensity of the love He has for us and the depth of the sacrifice Jesus made for us because of that love. But I know He does and I know He did and now I grieve.

These next few weeks are a bit more somber for me than they used to be. There is a thin pall over things, a touch of melancholy. Thus, the conflict. But I remind myself the story doesn't end on Good Friday. Alongside the nails, in the midst of the sorrow and pain, there is the hope and promise of new life, of better tomorrows, of resurrection, of bunnies and colorful eggs.

Think of Jesus as your friend. Find him in your spot. Thank him for what He did for you. Grieve a bit then honor His sacrifice by living fully alive in His love.

Then go ahead, have a Peep or two!