

Easter – April 15/16, 2017.

Story: "On my way home one day, I stopped to watch a Little League baseball game that was being played in a park near my home. As I sat down behind the bench on the first base line, I asked one of the kids what the score was.

"We're behind 14 to nothing," he answered with a smile.

"Really," I said. "I gotta tell you, ya don't look too discouraged."

"Discouraged?" the boy asked with a puzzled look on his face ...

"Why should we be discouraged? We haven't been up to bat yet!!"

Aaaah ... hope springs eternal!! But that little baseball player could be a theologian or a televangelist someday because he sees more clearly what so many of us sophisticated realists simply cannot see.

In this world, there are so many things that can rob us of hope: a politician makes promises and then fails to deliver; worries over an illness can leave us feeling doom and gloom; world terror, global warming, leaders' saber-rattling make us nervous and despondent; interest rates rising, retirement approaching, my team losing make it seem that all is lost.

The very first followers of Jesus felt exactly the same. Those who had stayed around had seen the One they called Lord and Messiah killed in the most ignominious manner: bloodied; naked; scorned; despised. All

their hopes for His kingdom were shattered. Once again, evil triumphed over good, the bad guys won, and the little man was crushed.

But against all the odds, the unbelievable happened ... a comeback for the ages! Jesus and His loving goodness couldn't be contained in the dark tomb. His Resurrection proves that good wins out in the end, might doesn't make right, and God has not forgotten all the little people of this world.

Jesus is Risen!! And, in Him, my hope soars ... hope that if I ask, I will be forgiven; hope that if I fear, He will give me strength; hope that if I die, I will rise and live in Him forever.

There may be fourteen reasons in my life for me to throw in the towel, give up, and lose hope. But there is one big reason for me to be filled with hope: Jesus is Risen!!

We haven't even been up to bat yet!!