

Sunday Message

EASTER SUNDAY

THE WORD

Year C • 20th April 2025 • Psalter Week 1

THE EMPTY TOMB

JOHN 20: 1-9



The Gospel reading tells the story of the first Easter. A mixture of excitement and confusion as Mary Magdalene discovers the empty tomb and then runs to break the news to Simon Peter and the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Those closest to Jesus receive the news first and then slowly, news of this great event spreads throughout the towns and countryside. We read St. Paul's letter in the second reading encouraging us to look higher, all the way to the top, to Christ. Christians are to think of what's above, not what's on earth. We're to live where Christ is – as a parish, as a community. We're a risen community, we're an Easter people and through our baptism, we share in Christ's new life and risen life of the first Easter. ■

REFLECT

I think we all have experience of happy people in our lives. They're the ones who are involved in the world, indeed you might even describe yourself as a happy person! Such a person enjoys festivals of life – like birthdays, first communions, confirmations, graduations, and marriages. An involved person sees problems like poverty, racism and hunger and tries to solve them. But occasionally such a person is tempted to lose hope – perhaps feeling abandoned by others in the struggle for justice and misunderstood by even the closest friends and relatives. Suffering and violence continue to grip our world and witnessing the disfigurement of people due to war and violence breaks our hearts. The challenge of Easter today is to understand human suffering in the light of Jesus' resurrection. We must take God's part in protecting against the violence and the suffering that are accepted so readily as inevitable.

Christians see help against despair in the celebration of Easter. The resurrection of our Lord is the central mystery of our faith, our chief festival of life. It gives hope to those who've lost it. Theologian and scholar Harold A. Buetow describes it as the day on which Jesus snatched victory from the jaws of defeat, vindicated his life and teachings and confirmed our faith. It's the most exciting event in world history. It isn't only an event that happened once in the past: it's the power of God that's seen constantly in people's lives. The resurrection is a sign of God's loving interest in our world. ■

SAY

'Be sure that you first preach by the way you live. If you do not, people will notice that you say one thing, but live otherwise, and your words will bring only cynical laughter and a derisive shake of the head.'
(Saint Charles Borromeo)

DO

Read the Gospel again and sense the joy and confusion Jesus' followers must have felt on this Resurrection Day.

LEARN

'The Church is the visible plan of God's love for humanity because God desires that the whole human race may become one People of God, form one Body of Christ, and be built up into one Temple of the Holy Spirit.'
(Paul VI, June 22, 1973)



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON*I have risen, and I am with you still, alleluia.**You have laid your hand upon me, alleluia.**Too wonderful for me, this knowledge, alleluia, alleluia.*

Or

*The Lord is truly risen, alleluia.**To him be glory and power**for all the ages of eternity, alleluia, alleluia.***COLLECT**

O God, who on this day,
 through your Only Begotten Son,
 have conquered death
 and unlocked for us the path to eternity,
 grant, we pray, that we who keep
 the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection
 may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit,
 rise up in the light of life.
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
 who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 God, for ever and ever.

*Amen.***FIRST READING** Acts 10:34a. 37-43

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

In those days: Peter opened his mouth and said: 'You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and caused him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.***RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Psalm 118(117):1-2. 16-17. 22-23. R. 24

R: *This is the day the LORD has made;
 let us rejoice in it and be glad.*

Or *Alleluia.*

1. Give praise to the LORD, for he is good;
 his mercy endures for ever.
 Let the house of Israel say,
 'His mercy endures for ever.' **R.**
2. The LORD's right hand is exalted.
 The LORD's right hand has done mighty deeds.
 I shall not die, I shall live
 and recount the deeds of the LORD. **R.**
3. The stone that the builders rejected
 has become the cornerstone.
 By the LORD has this been done,
 a marvel in our eyes. **R.**

SECOND READING Colossians 3:1-4

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians.

Brothers and sisters: If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Or 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters: Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.***SEQUENCE**

Christians, to the Paschal Victim offer sacrifice and praise.

The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb;

and Christ, the undefiled,

hath sinners to his Father reconciled.

Death with life contended: combat strangely ended!

Life's own Champion, slain, yet lives to reign.

Tell us, Mary: say what thou didst see upon the way.

The tomb the Living did enclose;

I saw Christ's glory as he rose!

The angels there attesting;

shroud with grave-clothes resting.

Christ, my hope, has risen: he goes before you into Galilee.

That Christ is truly risen from the dead we know.

Victorious king, thy mercy show!

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL 1 Corinthians 5:7b-8a**R:** *Alleluia, alleluia.*

Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed;
 let us therefore celebrate the festival in the Lord.

R: *Alleluia.***GOSPEL** John 20:1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going towards the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on the head of Jesus, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

The Gospel of the Lord.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.***PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Exultant with paschal gladness, O Lord,

we offer the sacrifice

by which your Church

is wondrously reborn and nourished.

Through Christ our Lord

*Amen.***COMMUNION ANTIPHON***Christ our Passover has been sacrificed, alleluia;**therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of purity and truth, alleluia, alleluia.***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Look upon your Church, O God,

with unfailing love and favour,

so that, renewed by the paschal mysteries,

she may come to the glory of the Resurrection.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.