

Easter Sunday: The Resurrection of the Lord

Christ is risen and it is “alleluia, alleluia” all the way. Filled with Easter joy, we come together to celebrate Christ’s victory over sin and death. We sing glory to his name for breaking the chains of death and opening the way of salvation and eternal life to us.

Easter comes to remind all of us of the unbreakable bond of love that exists between us and our departed loved ones. Many of us live out this beautiful reality in various ways such as paying periodic visits to the grave sites of our beloved dead. We visit their gravesites to say prayers, to place flowers, check on the condition of the headstones or pull weeds. Mary Magdalene is a model for us in this beautiful manner.

In the gospel from John, we learn that Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early in the morning of the first Easter Sunday while it was still dark. She came there to anoint Jesus’ body with spices. Imagine her emotions as she walked quietly to the burial place of her best friend Jesus. She was filled with pain, grief, disillusionment, and despair. Mary Magdalene never hoped to see Jesus again. Surprisingly, she found an empty tomb with only the burial wrappings; the shroud and the strips of linens that covered Jesus’ body. She ran back home to announce the shocking news to Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved. Scripture scholars identify this unnamed disciple as John. Mary Magdalene broke the news to the two disciples. She told them what made perfect sense, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid him” (John 20:2). The word “they” here refers to the soldiers whom Pilate put in charge of the tomb of Jesus.

Peter and the beloved disciple ran to the tomb and they saw everything just as it has been reported to them. This was the beginning of their Easter journey. They did not yet understand the scripture passage that Christ had to rise from the dead.

The resurrection power moved the disciples into action. As recounted in the first reading, Peter bore witness to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and its meaning for the world. Many people embraced Peter’s testimony and they repented and asked for the forgiveness of their sins.

In the second reading, Saint Paul tells us that since we have been raised with Christ we should seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Saint Paul exhorts us to set our hearts and minds on what is of lasting value, not of fleeting or temporal value.

There is a great privilege that we all share in Christ Jesus. Our life is hidden with him in God. In the waters of baptism, we die to sin and rise to new life in Christ. As once again, we renew our baptismal promises at Easter, let us do so with eager faith and strong commitment to walk in the light of the Risen Christ. Let us allow the resurrection to make a difference in our lives, to move us from the slavery of sin to newness of life, to freedom and peace.

And may the empty tomb continue to strengthen our hope in God’s promise of everlasting life in heaven.

I wish you, your families, and all loved ones a happy Easter!

God bless

Rev. Dr. Ben