



# Bringing Home the Word

The Resurrection of the Lord | April 16, 2017

## Nothing? Or Everything?

By Mary Katharine Deeley

**N**o angel.

No trumpet blasts.

No remarkable glow of light.

The only thing Mary saw was a stone that had been moved from its place at the entrance of Jesus' tomb. The only thing Peter and the beloved disciple saw were burial cloths set aside, the one for Jesus' head in a separate place.

Some have pointed out that this tells us only that a body that was supposed to be in the grave was not. It does not "prove" Jesus rose from the dead. But

there was an empty tomb—there was nothing when there should have been something.

We preach Christ risen from the dead on Easter. Is it foolishness? The whole of creation began in mystery—God took emptiness and created the world. Our new life begins in mystery, too. It starts with an empty tomb. God goes on to create stars, planets, animals, and human beings. Jesus, who had taught in the synagogues, healed the sick, and raised the dead, opens our eyes and hearts little by little and shows us that the empty tomb means abundant life for all who believe—a new relationship with God.

A little later in the day, Mary encounters Jesus in the garden, though she doesn't know him at first. When she understands it is Jesus, she touches the mystery that is life. When Jesus appears to the disciples, nail marks still visible, he wishes them peace and invites them and all of us into new life with God.

We've told this story for almost two thousand years, and it has never worn out or grown stale. What other evidence do we need? †

*Our new life begins  
with an empty tomb.*

## A Word From Pope Francis

I would like it to enter every heart, for it is there that God wants to sow this Good News: Jesus is risen, there is hope for you, you are no longer in the power of sin, of evil! Love has triumphed, mercy has been victorious! The mercy of God always triumphs!

Urbi Et Orbi Message,  
Easter, March 31, 2013



## Sunday Readings

**Acts 10:34a, 37–43**

"Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name."

**Colossians 3:1–4 or  
1 Corinthians 5:6b–8**

"Let us celebrate the feast...with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

**John 20:1–9 or  
Matthew 28:1–10**

"For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead."

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

### ONE QUESTION REFLECTION

- Are you fully convinced Jesus rose from the dead?
- How will you live the resurrection in your own life this Easter season?



# Resurrection Power

By Ron Rolheiser, OMI

**T**he resurrection is not just something that happened to Jesus 2,000 years ago and

will happen to each of us some time in the future after we die when our own bodies will be raised to new life. It is that, but it is much more.

The resurrection is something that buoys up every moment of life and every aspect of reality. God is always

making new life and undergirding it with a goodness, graciousness, mercy, and love that, in the end, heals all wounds, forgives all sins and brings deadness of all kinds to new life.

We feel this resurrecting power in the most ordinary moments of our lives. A sense of the resurrection, understood in its deepest sense, manifests itself unconsciously in our vitality, in what we call health; in the feeling, however dimly

it is sensed, that it is good to be alive. The very atomic structure of the cosmos feels and knows that resurrecting power. That is why it (like us, when we are healthy) pushes forward blindly, buoyed up by a hope that it cannot understand.

A friend of mine once sent me an Easter card that ended with the challenge: “May you leave behind you a string of empty tombs!” That is both my Easter wish and my Easter challenge for all of us. Let our wounded, muted voices begin to sing again: Christ is risen! Life is very, very good. †

Source: *Daybreaks*, © 2004, Liguori Publications

## Keeping Vigil

By Thomas Richstatter, OFM

**T**he dictionary explains that a vigil is “a purposeful or watchful staying awake during the ordinary hours of sleep.” This is what we do on Holy Saturday night. We gather, we wait, we watch. We keep vigil. We wait with the generations of those longing for Christ to rise from the tomb.

**Service of Light.** As the natural light of day fades away, we turn our attention to the light that is Jesus Christ. We gather around a fire and we think of Christ, who is the light of God’s glory. And from this special fire, we light our most beautiful candle.

As this paschal candle enters the church, its light spreads to the candles held by each member of the worshipping community.

**Salvation History.** In this light we

keep watch. And as we wait around this special fire—the paschal candle—we tell our story: creation, Abraham’s sacrifice, our passing through the Red Sea. Our joy and anticipation grow, and we sing “Glory to God in the highest,” a hymn we have not used since Lent began.

**Death in Baptism.** The Letter of Paul to the Romans makes explicit the fact that this is our resurrection night.

“Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life” (6:3–4).

We stand and joyfully sing “Alleluia” (a word we have not heard for forty days), and the Gospel of the resurrection is proclaimed: Christ is risen!

**Recommitment.** If your parish is welcoming new Catholics to the Church, you will also be called to renew your baptism promises. The Church turns to

its members and asks: “Do you reject sin? Do you believe? Do you wish to renew your baptism?” The answer to these questions are two simple words: “I do.”

In this “I do,” we renew all that this holy night promises so that in the Eucharist we can share with the newly baptized the food and drink that take all the sting out of death and ensure eternal victory. †

Source: *Catholic Update*,  
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Lord, your resurrection pierces the darkness of doubt and fear. May the power of your resurrection help me to deepen my love for you and all people.

*Mindful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

April 10–15

Monday

Easter Weekday:  
Acts 2:14, 22–33 / Mt 28:8–15

Tuesday

Easter Weekday:  
Acts 2:36–41 / Jn 20:11–18

Wednesday

Easter Weekday:  
Acts 3:1–10 / Lk 24:13–35

Thursday


Easter Weekday:  
Acts 3:11–26 / Lk 24:35–48

Friday

Easter Weekday:  
Acts 4:1–12 / Jn 21:1–14

Saturday

Easter Weekday:  
Acts 4:13–21 / Mk 16:9–15

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