



# Bringing Home the Word

*Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of the Lord (A)*

April 12, 2020

## History's Greatest Event

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Today we celebrate the most important mystery of our faith, the greatest event in the Bible and all of history. Nothing before the events of Easter morning contains their full meaning, and nothing after makes sense without them.

Jesus' conquering of death validated all of his preaching, teaching, and miracles. Now his doctrine of love, forgiveness, faith, and baptism is confirmed, as is God's definitive

revelation for humanity's salvation. In short, the resurrection proves that Jesus wasn't simply a good man, a wise teacher, or a revolutionary. He was all of those things and more—he was the Son of God.

Without the rising of Jesus from the dead, you cannot explain his appearing to the women, apostles, disciples, and crowds before his ascension. You cannot explain the transformation of the timid and baffled apostles into powerful preachers or the conversion of St. Paul from a murdering Pharisee to a persecuted Christian. Without the truth of the resurrection, you cannot explain the courage of any of the martyrs. Indeed, the Romans and Jews took these martyrs seriously. And if either group could have produced a body of evidence or a convincing explanation to debunk the story, they would have.

So today, set aside your Lenten focus on the mocked, beaten, and buried Jesus. Celebrate the resurrection. Christ the Lord—and Christianity—is a reality and a force. Rejoice! Reflect on the truth and power of this day, and allow God's Son to open the tombs of your heart and life. +

***Christ the Lord—and Christianity—is a reality and a force. Rejoice!***

### ***A Word from Pope Francis***

Today...we see that our journey is not in vain.... Why do you think that everything is hopeless, that no one can take away your own tombstones? Why do you give in to resignation and failure? Easter is the feast of tombstones taken away, rocks rolled aside.

—Easter Vigil homily, April 20, 2019



## Sunday Readings

**Acts 10:34a, 37-43**

This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible...to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance.

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

Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

**John 20:1-9**

Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed.

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- The resurrection changes everything. How does it change your life?
- Do you celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter or every day?

# We Are Made for Joy

By Kathy Coffey

*Thou shalt be joyful.*

Groans might greet this hypothetical eleventh commandment. Where are we supposed to cram joy on an overloaded to-do list? Does it go before or after the litany of chores, bills, and family obligations? All we want is to make it through the crunch of the workweek, then collapse in exhaustion.

Sad, but true. This stressed state of affairs points clearly toward the need for an eleventh commandment demanding joy. The rationale is this: If we were made for eternal joy, we should start now. We are more than cogs in a machine, toting up hours that feed corporate profits but fail to satisfy our souls. God made us for the everlasting bliss of gazing into his eyes. So if drudgery consumes our time, we should fill our free hours with deep nurture rather than televised fluff.

The acid test is always: How shall we be remembered? Imagine grandchildren saying, “She trudged dutifully, year after year, to all her commitments, but we didn’t see her much.” Or imagine their voices lightening as they recall, “She was so much fun! When we cooked her special chili we laughed and told stories.” “I’ll always remember his pride in his garden, how he’d grin at the first tomatoes, or how he happily took me canoeing.”



These positive attitudes aren’t Pollyanna-esque. They are choices as difficult to honor as any of the Ten Commandments. Let’s face it, daily news is often depressing. A sample of headlines: “Alabama Boy Kills Family.” “Coronavirus Looks Like a Pandemic.” “Two Teens Dead after Pickup Hits Runners.” The daily media hardly sends us rushing for the tambourines. That’s why we need God’s strength to remain faithful, confident, and hopeful.

## Joy in the Real World

From prison comes an example of one who honored the difficult “eleventh commandment.” There, Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote, “Yes, we are in chains, deprived of liberty, but in our sorrow we are restored to joy, without which we cannot live.... We underground men, we will dig in the entrails of the earth a tragic hymn to the God of joy!”

If convicts can sing praise from the “entrails of the earth,” what about us? We are rich in faith, blessings, comforts, and wealth. Yet our distracted days and frowning faces give little praise to the “God of joy.”

## Pursuit of Joy

Before we all start a serious pursuit of joy, a few qualifications: it cannot be sought.

It’s a gift. It springs from the conviction that the kingdom of God is near. It’s like Lazarus emerging from the tomb, squinting in the sunlight—and laughing. Joy is the appropriate response when we know we are saved, rescued despite failures, happy not in our achievements but in God’s fidelity.

The image of a child snoozing in a parent’s lap may be a cliché, but it resembles our contentment in God’s presence, where we are at all times. Joy spills from the security of knowing every need will be met—not necessarily the way we foresaw, but in God’s time and pleasure. Dancing conveys the same joy: arms wide, feet in rhythm, worries set aside.

Contrast that with our postures when burdened by negativity. We must carry ourselves with joy. The living Jesus won’t be found in boredom and inertia but in what brings beauty and restores grace. And because he is risen, so are we. Despite suffering, we were made for joy. Maybe that commandment isn’t carved on a stone tablet, but we can write it on our hearts. +



*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.*

—From *Mindful Meditations for Every Day of Lent and Easter*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

April 13–18

**Monday**, Octave of Easter:  
Acts 2:14, 22–33 / Mt 28:8–15

**Tuesday**, Octave of Easter:  
Acts 2:36–41 / Jn 20:11–18

**Wednesday**, Octave of Easter:  
Acts 3:1–10 / Lk 24:13–35

**Thursday**, Octave of Easter:  
Acts 3:11–26 / Lk 24:35–48

**Friday**, Octave of Easter:  
Acts 4:1–12 / Jn 21:1–14

**Saturday**, Octave of Easter:  
Acts 4:13–21 / Mk 16:9–15

Bringing Home  
the **Word** 

April 12, 2020

© 2020 Liguori Publications, a ministry of the Redemptorists. One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057. Scripture quotations in this publication are from the *New American Bible*, revised edition, © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC. The Pope Francis quotation is used with permission and copyright © 2020 *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*. All rights reserved. 1-800-325-9521. Liguori.org.