

## Easter Sunday

*The Resurrection of Jesus is the crowning truth of our faith in Christ, a faith believed and lived as the central truth by the first Christian community; handed on as fundamental by Tradition; established by the documents of the New Testament; and preached as an essential part of the Paschal mystery along with the cross:*

*Christ is risen from the dead!  
Dying, he conquered death;  
To the dead, he has given life.*

[CCC 638]

On the second morning after Jesus' burial, some women, who were his followers, came to anoint the body of Jesus as was the Jewish custom. They had not been able to do it the previous day as it was the Sabbath and work was not permitted on that day.

In Mark's [16:1-4], Luke's [24:1-3] and John's [20:1-2] Gospels the women arrive after the stone covering the tomb entrance has been rolled away. In Matthew's Gospel [28:1-4] when the women come to the tomb, they experience an earthquake and the appearance of an angel who rolls the stone away. Matthew is writing for a Jewish audience and puts the story in a more dramatic way as his audience would have been used to such a style of writing in some of the books of the Old Testament.

The important thing is that the tomb is empty. There is no sign of Jesus' body. In Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's Gospels they are assured by an Angel that Jesus has risen from the dead. The women led by Mary Magdalene, who is named in all the Gospel accounts, are the first witnesses to the empty tomb and they hurry away to tell the disciples what they have seen. This wonderful event rekindles in Jesus' followers the belief that Jesus is the Messiah; that what he taught about his loving Father is true, and that we can be hope-filled people.

Easter celebrates Christ's resurrection from the dead. It is the oldest Christian feast and the most important feast of the ecclesial calendar. Easter is a reminder that through his death and resurrection, Jesus brought us the promise of new life.

## ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE IN THIS LESSON

### Matthew 28:1-8 | *The Resurrection*

The women do not find the dead body of Jesus in the tomb as they expected. Rather they find an angel. The message of the angel is the revelation from God of his action regarding Jesus. It represents an early formulation of the faith of the early church: *'Jesus who was crucified is not here; for he has been raised ... you will see him'. 'He has been raised!'* [see Matthew 28:5-7]

To point to something that is beyond our everyday experience, we must use imagery and analogy. To speak of what God did to Jesus after his death, Matthew chooses the simple word 'raised' that he used when Jesus raised Simon's mother-in-law from her bed [Matthew 8:15], and when the disciples roused Jesus from sleep during the storm [Matthew 8:25]. More mysteriously, this same word was used when Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus from her 'sleep' [Matthew 9:25].

When God raises a person from the 'sleep' of death, he raises that person not back to this life by a kind of resuscitation, but to the life-beyond-death. At the Last Supper, Jesus shared with his disciples his confidence that God would not leave him in death: *'After I am raised up, I will go ahead of you into Galilee'*.

Because of certain ways in which they experienced the risen Jesus, Jesus' disciples came to believe that he who was crucified, was in truth, alive and active among them after his death. God had raised him from death into the life-beyond-death. It was the wonder of this that brought them through their fright and the shattering of their hopes to the new energy that empowered them to do to others what Jesus had done to them.

It was this Spirit that brought about the incredible growth of the Christian community. It is this foundational belief that is presented by Matthew as the explanation for the absence of Jesus' dead body. The resurrected life is not simply a new beginning. All that made up Jesus' humanity is caught up in the transforming mystery of grace. The empty tomb and the dramatic language before us in this ritual text depict for us the wonderful truth that death is robbed of its prey, and that the final victory is not with darkness but with light.

*The Gospel according to Saint Matthew. An Introductory Commentary.  
Michael Fallon MSC. Chevalier Press. Australia. 2005.*

## Easter Sunday



### MAIN TEACHING AND LEARNING POINTS

- Jesus died and was raised to a new life.
- On Easter Sunday, members of God's family celebrate that Jesus is risen.

### EASTER SUNDAY

After Jesus had risen from the dead, his friends believed he was truly the Son of God. We also believe that the risen Jesus is the Son of God, and is always with us. On Easter Sunday, members of God's family celebrate with joy, that Jesus is risen.

We celebrate that Jesus is risen by singing special Easter songs, lighting a special Easter candle and saying special words like 'Jesus is risen, Alleluia!' 'Alleluia' means 'praise God!'

At home we may celebrate Easter by eating special foods such as Hot Cross Buns, Easter Eggs and other special foods.

### GOD'S WORD

#### **Matthew 28:1-9 | The Resurrection**

*Parent: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.*

**Child responds: Glory to you, O Lord.** (While saying the words, trace a small cross with the thumb on the forehead, lips and heart.)

After the Sabbath, as Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake; an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled the stone away and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid that they trembled and became like dead men.

The angel spoke to the women. "You must not be afraid," he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has been raised, just as he said.

Come here and see the place where he was lying. Go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from death, and now he is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him!' Remember what I have told you." So they left the tomb in a hurry, afraid and yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Peace be with you." ... [GNT]

The Word of the Lord.

**Child responds: Thanks be to God.**

### FOCUS QUESTIONS

Ask your child the following questions to help them reflect on the Scripture.

- **What happened when the women arrived at the tomb?**
- **What did the angels say to the women?**
- **What did the angel tell the women to do?**
- **When they saw Jesus, what did he say to the women?**
- **What do you think this story tell us?**

### PRAYER OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

*Begin with the Sign of the Cross.*

<b>Parent</b>	Let us pray: Jesus, on Good Friday we remember that you died for us.
<b>Child</b>	<i>We praise you, and we thank you.</i>
<b>Parent</b>	Jesus, on Easter Sunday we remember that you rose to a new life.
<b>Child</b>	<i>We praise you, and we thank you.</i>
<b>Parent</b>	Jesus, we know that you love us and are always with us.
<b>Child</b>	<i>We praise you, and we thank you.</i>
<b>Parent</b>	Jesus is risen!
<b>Child</b>	<i>Alleluia, Alleluia!</i>



## Easter Alleluia

STONE

AFRAID

JESUS

RAISED

HEAVEN

On Easter Sunday, Mary Magdalene and the other

Mary went to the tomb of \_\_\_\_\_. An angel came

down from \_\_\_\_\_ and rolled the \_\_\_\_\_ away

to show that the tomb was empty.

The angel spoke to the women and said, "Do not be

\_\_\_\_\_. Jesus has been \_\_\_\_\_ from the dead."

Draw the two Mary's finding the empty tomb on Easter Sunday.