

He is risen

Notes on the Bible readings

- It is Easter morning, the resurrection has happened and the tomb is empty. As Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Mary the mother of James approach Joseph of Arimathea's tomb, they find that the stone has been rolled away and Jesus has disappeared. These women are the first witnesses to the resurrection, but they are distraught. Having come to embalm Jesus' dead body with spices, they find themselves unable to do even this simple act for him.

- Suddenly two men in dazzling clothes appear and remind the grief-stricken women of Jesus' words: that he would die, but that he promised to rise again. Filled with new energy, the women rush back to the city to share their eyewitness account with the 11 remaining disciples, but they are not easily believed. Under Jewish law, women were not considered reliable witnesses. Peter needs to see the evidence for himself, and sets off running to the tomb. He finds the scene just as the women have said and returns home astounded, but interestingly, he does not immediately share the news.

- This reading is followed by the Emmaus road story where Jesus appears to his disciples incognito and then 'opens their eyes' so they recognise him. The emotions on Easter morning do not allow for such comprehension. It clearly took some time for the Early Church to process the amazing reality of Jesus' resurrection. What will be our response as we celebrate the joy of Easter?

Questions for reflection

- ▶ How do you imagine the empty tomb?
- ▶ How might you have reacted if you had been there?
- ▶ Who would you have told first?



A prayer of celebration

We gaze at the empty cross, to ponder Christ's love. We gaze at the empty tomb, to reflect on the hope that his rising brings. We worship Christ who is risen. Alleluia! Amen.

A prayer for others

Let us pray for those for whom today is just another day: those who have to work; those who have not yet encountered the risen Christ; those who do not celebrate his love.

For God gave his Son, to show his love and bring life.

We pray for all who flee their homes in desperation, and travel into an uncertain future. Strengthen them on their journeys, and keep alive their vision of finding a secure and welcoming home.

For God gave his Son, to show his love and bring life.

Let us pray for those who grieve today: those recently bereaved; those for whom this is a time of anniversary; those who wait beside a loved one who is dying.

For God gave his Son, to show his love and bring life.

Let us pray for all in need throughout the world: those without access to clean water; those with insufficient food; those who cannot access the health care that they need.

For God gave his Son, to show his love and bring life.

Let us pray for each other and for ourselves, that we may have wholeness, peace and hope through the presence in our lives of the risen Lord.

For God gave his Son, to show his love and bring life. Amen.

A personal prayer

Risen Lord, you will be with me today.

Help me to acknowledge your presence and enjoy your companionship.

Amen.

For reflection and comment linking this week's Bible reading to the news, current issues and events, go to www.rootsontheweb.com and click on PostScript.



Live your faith

Do something intentionally this week to show that Jesus is alive in your life – it could be talking to someone about your faith or something more practical.