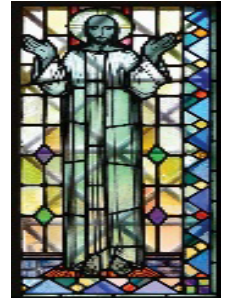


LIVING FAITH

EASTER SUNDAY

March 31, 2024



THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY—John 20:1-9

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

REFLECTING ON THE GOSPEL

Happy Easter! The women came to the tomb early in the morning to complete the burial rites for Jesus. Imagine their surprise when they found the huge, heavy stone rolled away, and the tomb empty! That empty tomb changed everything.

Mary Magdalene, ran to tell the Apostles the news. These women were the first evangelizers, bringing the Good News of Jesus' Resurrection to the other followers of Jesus. Imagine their hope and joy! Imagine their frustration when the Apostles did not believe them! Peter must have realized, though, that there really was something momentous going on. He ran to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said.

Hope was born that morning. Jesus had risen from the dead. Death could not confine him. Because of that morning, death cannot confine us, either.



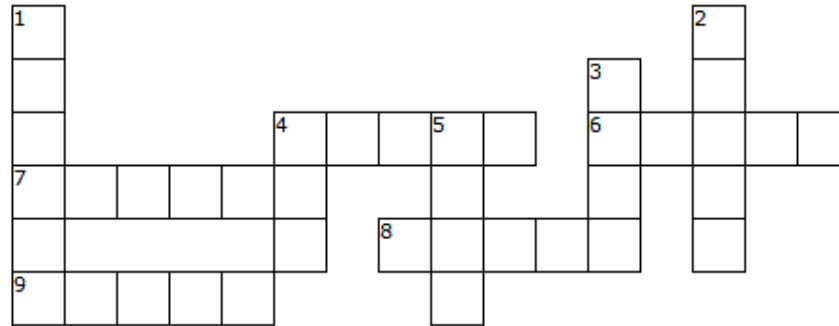
TALKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- How do you need to experience hope in your life today?
- What new life do you ask of Jesus for yourself or for someone else?

The Case of the Empty Tomb

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

John 20:1 (NIV)



ACROSS

4. A piece of fabric made by weaving cotton, wool, or other fibers
6. Not dead
7. The day we celebrate Jesus' resurrection
8. To have nothing inside
9. What was used to cover the entrance to Jesus' tomb

DOWN

1. Messengers from heaven
2. The color of snow; the opposite of black
3. The woman who found the stone rolled away from Jesus' tomb
4. To produce tears; to weep
5. A grave or a room where someone is buried

EMPTY	ANGELS	EASTER	CLOTH	WHITE
STONE	ALIVE	TOMB	CRY	MARY

THE CHURCH TEACHES

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS FROM THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

639 The mystery of Christ's resurrection is a real event, with manifestations that were historically verified, as the New Testament bears witness. In about A.D. 56 St. Paul could already write to the Corinthians: "I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve." The Apostle speaks here of the living tradition of the Resurrection which he had learned after his conversion at the gates of Damascus.



THE EMPTY TOMB

640 "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." The first element we encounter in the framework of the Easter events is the empty tomb. In itself it is not a direct proof of Resurrection; the absence of Christ's body from the tomb could be explained otherwise. Nonetheless the empty tomb was still an essential sign for all. Its discovery by the disciples was the first step toward recognizing the very fact of the Resurrection. This was the case, first with the holy women, and then with Peter. The disciple "whom Jesus loved" affirmed that when he entered the empty tomb and discovered "the linen cloths lying there", "he saw and believed". This suggests that he realized from the empty tomb's condition that the absence of Jesus' body could not have been of human doing and that Jesus had not simply returned to earthly life as had been the case with Lazarus.



THE APPEARANCES OF THE RISEN JESUS

641 Mary Magdalene and the holy women who came to finish anointing the body of Jesus, which had been buried in haste because the Sabbath began on the evening of Good Friday, were the first to encounter the Risen One. Thus the women were the first messengers of Christ's Resurrection for the apostles themselves. They were the next to whom Jesus appears: first Peter, then the Twelve. Peter had been called to strengthen the faith of his brothers, and so sees the Risen One before them; it is on the basis of his testimony that the community exclaims: "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"



642 Everything that happened during those Paschal days involves each of the apostles - and Peter in particular - in the building of the new era begun on Easter morning. As witnesses of the Risen One, they remain the foundation stones of his Church. The faith of the first community of believers is based on the witness of concrete men known to the Christians and for the most part still living among them. Peter and the Twelve are the primary "witnesses to his Resurrection", but they are not the only ones - Paul speaks clearly of more than five hundred persons to whom Jesus appeared on a single occasion and also of James and of all the apostles.



THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IN STAINED GLASS



DID YOU KNOW? In the Basilica-Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, three of the stained-glass windows depict the Resurrection. One of these is copied on the front page of this week's *Living Faith*; it is found among the windows by Gerard Earley, of Dublin, on the ground level of the Basilica, among the windows depicting the mysteries of the Rosary. It was crafted in 1954-55, and placed there as part of the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the Basilica. Two other windows are shown immediately above this text. The image on the left is also by Gerard Earley, and once was placed in the Baptistry of the Basilica. It, too, dates from 1954-55. Today it can be found in the corridor immediately opposite the sacristy. The third image, shown on the right above, is by Louis Lichtenfeldt-Koch, and was crafted in Beauvais, France in about 1890, and can be found on the clerestory (upper) level of the Basilica. This window is stunning in its colours and the way it depicts the resurrection.