

EASTER SUNDAY



Living Our Salvation

Lord of heaven and earth,
the Resurrection of your Son is a promise
that you will not abandon us to sin
and death
but will transform all creation
until it has at last become your
perfect kingdom.
Continue the work you have begun.
Refashion us now, today.

Liberate us from whatever is luring us
into the grave.

Share your life-giving power with us
so that we will rejoice in your love,
live in hope of our future together,
act with the unwavering courage of Jesus,
and marvel at all you accomplish.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 12, 2020

New Beginnings



Today's Readings: Acts 10:34a, 37–43; Psalm 118:1–2, 16–17, 22–23; Colossians 3:1–4 or 1 Corinthians 5:6b–8; John 20:1–9 or Matthew 28:1–10. Today we rejoice, feast, and spend time with family and friends. Easter Sunday is a day of beginnings. In John's Gospel, two disciples rush to the empty tomb, where it dawns on them that something tremendous has happened. In Matthew's Gospel account, the women are given only a few moments with the Risen Christ before he sends them to evangelize.

The months following Jesus' Resurrection are busy ones. In the passage from the Acts of the Apostles that we hear today, Peter has entered the house of a Gentile. Filled with the Holy Spirit, this Apostle delivers a powerful proc-

lamation of the Gospel, yet before he finishes, the Holy Spirit comes upon everyone else in the room too. Throughout the Easter season we will hear how the Spirit of the Risen Lord leads and empowers Jesus' followers to inspire more and more people to believe in the Resurrection and to make a new beginning of their lives.

It is now our turn. It is our season of new beginnings. God shared the Spirit with us so that we will "seek what is above" and allow the Spirit to further transform us into just and holy people. God shared the Spirit with us so that we will enter people's houses, enter people's lives, and help them to begin anew.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 13 The Empty Tomb

No one disputes that the tomb was empty. The question is how it became empty. By spreading a false report, some of the religious authorities hope to prevent people from believing that Jesus rose from the dead. When Peter speaks to the crowd, however, he doesn't use the empty tomb as proof of Jesus' Resurrection, but refers instead to the Scriptures and his encounter with the Risen Jesus. How would you explain the true meaning of the empty tomb? *Today's Readings: Acts 2:14, 22–33; Psalm 16:1–2a and 5, 7–8, 9–10, 11; Matthew 28:8–15.*

Tuesday, April 14 The Spirit of the Risen Lord

Mary Magdalene must let go of Jesus as she knew him in order to encounter him in a new way. Having been crucified and raised, Jesus is no longer confined to time and space, but is now present among and even within his followers through the gift of the Holy Spirit. All who accept this gift become brothers and sisters of the Risen Lord and sons and daughters of God the Father. Send a note of welcome to anyone in your community who was baptized at the Easter Vigil. *Today's Readings: Acts 2:36–41; Psalm 33:4–5, 18–19, 20 and 22; John 20:11–18.*

Wednesday, April 15 Amazement

The two disciples leaving Jerusalem are amazed by the women's report of the empty tomb. They grow increasingly astonished as the Risen Christ opens the Word and breaks bread with them—and then vanishes. Also astonished are the people in the temple who see the disabled man jumping about and praising God. These stories invite us to rejoice at the enduring power of Christ in the world. *Today's Readings: Acts 3:1–10; Psalm 105:1–2, 3–4, 6–7, 8–9; Luke 24:13–35.*

Thursday, April 16 Witnesses

Jesus' followers witnessed his mighty deeds. Two of his disciples witnessed the Risen Lord as they headed to Emmaus. Still more disciples heard the Risen Christ speak words of peace to them and prepare them to minister in his name. A man in the temple area experienced the Risen Lord acting through Peter. Peter urged the people who witnessed that healing to acknowledge the saving power of the Risen Lord. Thank someone who has been an especially strong Christian witness for you. *Today's Readings: Acts 3:11–26; Psalm 8:2ab and 5, 6–7, 8–9; Luke 24:35–48.*

Friday, April 17 Bolder than Ever

Peter seems as impulsive as ever as he dives into the water to swim to the Risen Lord. This man of action then rushes to drag over the net laden with fish when Jesus asks for more food. The Holy Spirit strengthens this natural tendency of Jesus' lead disciple. After a night in the custody of religious authorities who wish to silence him, Peter goes on to speak as boldly as ever. Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you do something brave today. *Today's Readings: Acts 4:1–12; Psalm 118:1–2 and 4, 22–24, 25–27a; John 21:1–14.*

Saturday, April 18 Dealing with Disbelief

The extended ending of Mark's Gospel account is reassuring to those who struggle to believe in the Risen Lord. Even Jesus' closest followers did not initially believe in the Resurrection. Jesus had to appear to them and empower them with his Spirit. Once that happened, it became "impossible" for them not to share the story of Christ. Read and reflect on a Gospel passage for this week. Imagine you are one of those early disciples. Ask God to strengthen your faith. *Today's Readings: Acts 4:13–21; Psalm 118:1 and 14–15ab, 16–18, 19–21; Mark 16:9–15.*

