

Easter Octave

BE STILL

Sing:

CWB II 350: GA 360

Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.

Gathering Prayer:

Easter vigil, Lighting of the Easter Candle

Christ yesterday and today
The beginning and the end
Alpha and Omega
all time belongs to him
and all the ages
to him be glory and power
through every age forever, Amen.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke (24:1-12)

Why look among the dead for someone who is alive?

On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, the women went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but on entering discovered that the body of the Lord Jesus was not there. As they stood there not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. Terrified, the women lowered their eyes. But the two men said to them, 'Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen. Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee: that the Son of Man had to be handed over into the power of sinful men and be crucified, and rise again on the third day?' And they remembered his words.

When the women returned from the tomb they told all this to the Eleven and to all the others. The women were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. The other women with them also told the apostles, but this story of theirs seemed pure nonsense, and they did not believe them.

Peter, however, went running to the tomb. He bent down and saw the binding cloths, but nothing else; he then went back home, amazed at what had happened.

The gospel of the Lord.

Ponder:

Re-read the text. Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) noted that in the presence of God, during a recollected reading of the text, it is good to practice *Lectio Divina*—the reading of God's word in prayer asking that it 'enlighten and renew' us. The following questions may help with this:

- Lord, what does this text mean to me?
- What is it about my life that you want me to change in response to this text?
- What troubles me about this text?
- Why am I not interested in this?
- What do I find pleasant about this text?
- What is it about this word that moves me?
- What attracts me? Why does it attract me?

Reflect:

This is a powerful story. It is hard to imagine how the women must have felt as they approached the tomb with their spices. Most of us know what those first days after the death of a loved one is like—there is a numbness, a sadness, a sense of hopelessness that seems to touch everything. And they are met with two men at their side saying 'why look among the dead for someone who is alive?'

Are there times in our lives when we have failed to see life? Perhaps this week we are offered the invitation to look for Jesus among the living—in ourselves, in our communities and in the world. Where is Jesus for us?

Perhaps this quote from Pope John Paul II may help:

We do not pretend that life is all beauty. We are aware of darkness and sin, of poverty and pain. But we know Jesus has conquered sin and passed through his own pain to the glory of the Resurrection. And we live in the light of his Paschal Mystery—the mystery of his Death and Resurrection. "We are an Easter People and Alleluia is our song!". We are not looking for a shallow joy but rather a joy that comes from faith, that grows through unselfish love, that respects the "fundamental duty of love of neighbour, without which it would be unbecoming to speak of joy". We realize that joy is demanding; it demands unselfishness; it demands a readiness to say with Mary: "Be it done unto me according to thy word". — Angelus, Adelaide, Australia November 1986, Pope John Paul II

RESPOND

Pray:

This joyful Eastertide, away with care and sorrow!
Our Love, the Crucified, hath sprung to life this morrow.
Had Christ, that once was slain,
ne'er burst his three-day prison,
our faith had been in vain;
but now is Christ arisen, arisen, arisen!
But now is Christ arisen!

Death's flood hath lost its chill,
since Jesus crossed the river:
Lord of all life, from ill my passing soul deliver,
Had Christ, that once was slain,
ne'er burst his three-day prison,
our faith had been in vain;
but now is Christ arisen, arisen, arisen!
But now is Christ arisen!

Our flesh in hope shall rest,
and for a season slumber,
till trump from east to west
shall wake the dead in number.
Had Christ, that once was slain,
e'er burst his three-day prison,
our faith had been in vain;
but now is Christ arisen, arisen, arisen!
But now is Christ arisen!

Words: George R. Woodward (1848-1934), 1894